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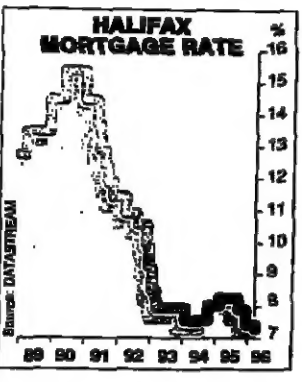


Corner turned at last, say analysts

Mortgage cut boost for house sales

By MARIANNE CURPHEY, RACHEL KELLY AND NICHOLAS WOOD

THE mortgage price war intensified yesterday after the Chancellor announced his third base rate cut in four months. High Street lenders led by the Halifax, the biggest building society, immediately shaved a quarter of a percentage point off their home loan rates to about 7.25 per cent. But the Bradford & Bingley promised to undercut the Halifax and reduced one of its variable rates to 6 per cent. Two weeks ago, the Nationwide jumped the gun with a cut to 6.99 per cent to prove to customers the benefits of sticking with an old-fashioned building society as rivals rushed to merge or become banks. That cut takes effect next month and the society said yesterday that it was considering whether a further reduction was in order. The latest move, combined with other mortgage incentives and next month's tax cuts, is expected to leave the average family about £450 a year better off, and analysts predicted that it could prove the turning point for the housing market. Claran Barr, UK economist with Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, thought that house sales might rise by 10 per cent to 1.29 million this year — half the 1988 figure — and that prices would go up by 25 per cent. "All the factors are right for improvement," he said. "Already glimmers of recovery have been detected and the



Halifax has reported slight increases in prices for seven consecutive months. Last month they were up by 0.9 per cent and the society expects prices overall to rise by 2 per cent this year. Estate agents and builders cautiously welcomed yesterday's news. Hugh Dunsmore-Hardy, chief executive of the National Association of Estate Agents, said the mortgage rate reduction was another prop to support the housing market recovery, but Roger Humber of the Housebuilders' Federation said there was still scope for deeper cuts. Kenneth Clarke also hinted at further cuts as he expressed confidence that consumers would soon begin to enjoy "the fruits of Tory economic management". He said: "I think 1996 is going to be a very good year for the British economy, getting stronger as it goes on." Conservative MPs desper-

ate for a "feelgood factor" before the general election welcomed the Chancellor's recognition that rates could be cut again — they believe that the base rate must fall to 5.5 per cent by the autumn if the Government is to have any chance of reelection — but Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, saw the cut as a sign of weakness rather than strength in the economy. Malcolm Bruce of the Liberal Democrats said the cut would help industry, but he believed rates would have to rise again as the "inevitable" pre-election boom fuelled inflation. Financial markets barely reacted when the cut was announced because it had been widely anticipated, but the FT-SE 100 Index later fell by nearly 50 points after heavy falls in America where hopes of lower rates were dashed by figures showing that the economy was growing much more strongly than expected. Ian Amstad, economist at Bankers Trust, said: "Ken Clarke got his rate cut in with just a few hours to spare. It could have caused a bloodbath if it had happened after the US data. The US and UK economies are closely synchronised and this is an indication that UK growth may already be poised to strengthen without the help of cheaper money." **Best deals, page 2**
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Tourists duck as pigeons that have survived the poacher cause a flutter swooping down on nuts and berries in Trafalgar Square yesterday

Pigeon fancier finds oven-ready market

By ROBIN YOUNG

A DEARTH of woodpigeons before Christmas is likely to have triggered the theft of feral birds from Trafalgar Square. Police hunting a man who is believed to have trapped and carried away 4,000 of the square's birds were told yesterday the urban poacher may have found a ready market. Last year's hot summer and mild autumn produced a bumper crop of nuts and berries, which kept flocks of wild pigeons in the woods and safely under cover until well after the pheasant shooting season had begun. "You simply could not get woodpigeons," said Chris Driver, pigeon purchaser for Cutty Catering Specialists in south-east London, a firm which supplies London restau-

rants. "Usually game dealers get plenty from country estates, but before Christmas supplies simply vanished. Birds are still very difficult to get. That is why the pigeon thief is likely to have spotted a gap in the market." Roger Hicks, a game dealer in the Cotswolds, agreed. He said: "The pigeons are still on the nuts and berries now. When they do not move out on to the crops in the fields they do not get shot. Supplies are very short." Feral pigeons from Trafalgar Square, once plucked, would be smaller and thinner but otherwise difficult to distinguish from woodpigeons. They would also taste similar, although because they are not regularly culled their average age is likely to be higher, and the meat tougher. Opinion yesterday was unanimous that nobody

would knowingly want to eat a pigeon from Trafalgar Square, but experts were doubtful that even a trained palate would be able to tell the difference. Michel Roux, junior, Michelin-starred chef at Le Gavroche in Mayfair, said: "I suppose if it was minced and seasoned it would be possible to mask any bad flavours, but I would expect the birds to be terribly tough and rosey." Supermarkets sell thousands of woodpigeons. At Sainsbury's the price is £2.45 for oven-ready birds. A spokeswoman said: "Trafalgar Square birds would never pass our quality controls." The birds used for roasting or grilling in top London restaurants are squabs, or baby pigeons, usually no more than four weeks old and fed on

nothing but "pigeon's milk", predigested food regurgitated by the mother. Squabs are costly, most coming from France, particularly the Bresse region. Michel Roux has squabs on the menu at Le Gavroche, with fresh truffle, cream and foie gras, at £38.60. At the Savoy Grill, stuffed with truffles and served with shiitake mushrooms and celeriac, French pigeon is £19.25. Greek restaurants last night denied that they might be purchasers for feral birds. "Pigeons are certainly a delicacy in Greece," said Alex, manager of Kalamaras, a taverna in west London, "but we do not have to pay anyone to catch them. If we wanted we could catch them ourselves."

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Old enemies meet on the Bangalore pitch

By CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI AND TUNKU VARADARAJAN

ALMOST one billion Indians and Pakistanis — a fifth of the world population today — will turn their attention today on the city of Bangalore where the two countries will meet in the World Cup cricket competition. It will be their first match

on Indian territory since 1987. Decades of enmity from three wars on the sub-continent will be channelled into this contest. Hindu extremists have told Pakistanis not to set foot on Indian soil and have vowed to disrupt the game. Thousands of troops and police have been deployed in the southern city and supporters of both countries have been banned from flying national flags. The Pakistani players are being guarded as if each were a president.

The extremist Shiv Sena has demanded "years in the eyes of every Indian Muslim" should India lose.

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Blair delays introduction of power to raise 'tartan tax'

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR will block a new Scottish Parliament from raising taxes during its first term as part of a startling policy shift designed to reassure voters north of the border.

The move comes amid increasing unease among the Labour leadership over the apparent success of the Tory Tartan Tax campaign mounted by Michael Forsyth against Labour's tax plans for a devolved Scottish parliament. Under the existing proposals a Scottish parliament has been promised powers to raise or lower the basic rate of tax by 3p. But, in a clear sign that Tony Blair has been rattled by the Tory campaign, the Labour leadership will shortly make clear that the Scottish

Labour Party will go into the next election with a manifesto pledge not to raise taxes for its first four-year term. This will mean that the new parliament will be prevented from using its tax powers until at least 2002, assuming Labour has a majority. Yesterday Mr Blair made little reference to the Scottish Parliament when he addressed the Scottish Labour Party conference in Edinburgh. In a robust defence of New Labour, he warned his Shadow Cabinet colleagues that he would not sanction any spending commitments. In a clear signal that a Labour Government will be tough on public spending, he revealed that he had told his Shadow

Cabinet to draw up a blueprint for a Labour manifesto where any new programmes were funded by better use of existing resources. Mr Blair also gave a strong defence of Gordon Brown's policy to withdraw benefits from the Under-25s who fail to take up offers of a job or training. In a reference to several critical motions tabled against Mr Brown's proposals, Mr Blair said: "When I hear people in our party refer to our plans to get the young unemployed into work as 'an attack on the young' I rage at their stupidity just as I rage at the waste of young lives spent on the dole." The proposals would get people back to work.

Palestinian fund accounts frozen

The Charity Commissioners have frozen the bank accounts of a Palestinian fund-raising organisation after allegations of possible links to Hamas militants.

Bankers for the Palestinians Relief and Development Fund, also known as Interpal, have been told not to release any money. The spokeswoman said the action was protective and temporary. **Page 13**

Turkish Cypriot airliner hijacked

A Turkish Cypriot Boeing 727 with at least 100 passengers on board was hijacked on its way from Nicosia to Istanbul and was reported to be heading for Sofia. An airline official said the passengers included Russians, Iranians, Bulgarians and Turks.

Beer on the house in heavy-drinker survey

By RUSSELL JENKINS

ACADEMICS at Birmingham University are to carry out a long-term study into the benefits as well as the harmful effects of heavy drinking with the help of a £433,278 grant from the Government. Researchers are recruiting 500 hardened drinkers through the Campaign for Real Ale to take part in the ten-year project funded by the Department of Health. Male guinea-pigs will have to drink at least 50 units a week, the equivalent of 25 pints, and females 20 units, equal to 35 glasses of wine. The Government's recommended limit is 30 units for men and 20 for women. Volunteers will receive £20 every time they are interviewed and will be regularly

questioned to make sure they are drinking enough. Professor Jim Orford, director of the project, said the main objective was to look at the different ways alcohol affects people. "I would be surprised if there weren't a lot of things said about the benefits," Professor Orford said. "We want to get away from the doom and gloom idea that is in the usual health approach." Warren Hawksley, MP for Halesowen and Stourbridge, said: "It sounds to me like these academics are spending money for the sake of it." A Department of Health spokesman said: "This study is looking at a whole range of people and whether or not they are in contact with medical services over ten years."



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Cost of mortgages cheapest since 1960s

By CAROLINE MERRELL

THE cut in mortgage rates by most main lenders will make buying a house the cheapest it has been since the 1960s. As well as being able to benefit from variable rates at a record low, new borrowers have an array of discounts, fixed rates and cashback schemes to choose from.

Many societies are also offering to refund legal expenses and surveyors' costs. The cheapest variable rate will continue to be offered by the direct arm of Bradford & Bingley Building Society, which is planning to cut its rate from 6.25 to 6 per cent.

Other offers include a one-year 0.5 per cent fix from the Hincley & Rugby Building Society. The monthly repayments on a £50,000 mortgage under the scheme would be about £18 a month. However, at the end of the one-year offer period, borrowers will have to move to the society's variable rate, currently 7.49 per cent, or take out another

offer. Other cheap mortgages include a 3.75 per cent fixed rate from the Skipton and a 5.99 per cent fixed rate from the Yorkshire. Again, at the end of the fixed-rate offer, borrowers could face a big increase in mortgage payments.

Other societies are offering competitive "capped-rate" loans. The rates on these loans will not rise above the cap but can fall if base rates fall. Among the more competitive is one from Barclays, which will cap the interest rate at 3.65 per cent for one year.

Other societies are taking the sting out of moving house by offering cash incentives for those wishing to borrow. Anyone taking out a mortgage with Northern Rock can benefit from a cashback scheme of up to £9,000. Other societies making cash handouts to borrowers include the Bradford & Bingley, the Yorkshire and the National & Provincial. These will pay borrowers between

£6,500 and £10,000. The size of the cashback depends on the amount borrowed. The downside of many of these special deals is that they carry high redemption penalties.

Borrowers could be tied with the lender for many years after the special offer has ended. The redemption penalties could be as much as six months' interest.

There was another unexpected fillip on the back of the interest rate cut. Credit card companies also started announcing lower rates. For example, the RBS Advanta Visa card, which is designed to move its rates in tandem with base-rate movements, will have an annual percentage rate (APR) of 15.6 per cent from April 1, down from 15.9 per cent. Barclaycard plans to cut its APR to 22.3 per cent from 22.6 per cent.

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BEST DEALS AVAILABLE

FIXED RATES	% RATE	EARLY REDEMPTION PENALTY
Hincley & Rugby to Feb 97	0.50	Difference between fixed and standard variable rate must be repaid
Skipton to May 98	3.75	5% of original loan if redeemed before 31/03/01
Yorkshire three years	5.99	6% of original loan in first year, declining gradually thereafter
Coverity March, 2001	6.79	None
Bristol & West March, 2001	6.99	6 months of mortgage payments if redeemed before 28/02/2002
VARIABLE/DISCOUNT RATES	% RATE	% DISCOUNT
Barclays Bank	7.49	6.1% for 12 months = 1.39%
John Charcol Election Beater	7.24	9% for 12 months = 4.24% and 3% cashback
Hallam	7.24	3.5% to 30/04/98 = 3.74%
Northern Rock	7.24	2.75% to 1/05/99 = 4.49%
National Counties	7.49	1.5% for 5 years = 5.99%
CAPPED RATES	% RATE	EARLY REDEMPTION PENALTY
Barclays Bank	3.75	3.5% of total loan if redeemed before 30/04/2000
The Mortgage Business	5.85	9 months interest if redeemed in first 6 years
Birmingham Midshires MSL	7.88	9 months of mortgage payments if redeemed in first year, declining gradually thereafter

Rates may change as base rate cuts take effect
Source: John Charcol

Adams given cold shoulder by angry allies in US

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

SENATOR Edward Kennedy, the leading Irish-American politician, has refused to see Gerry Adams when the Sinn Féin president arrives in Washington next week for St Patrick's Day celebrations.

Mr Kennedy, one of the first to campaign for a United States visa for Mr Adams at the start of 1994, has decided he will not grant him his usual audience on Capitol Hill.

"If the ceasefire is resumed before Gerry Adams comes to town, I am sure that Senator Kennedy will see Mr Adams," a spokesman for Mr Kennedy said. His reluctance reflects increasing frustration among members of the Clinton Administration in the failure of Mr Adams to deliver peace in Northern Ireland.

American support for the Sinn Féin leader has weakened because of the London bombings and the increasingly bellicose language of IRA hardliners. The White House, which last week renewed Mr Adams's three-month visa, has said he may not raise funds and will not have formal meetings with any government departments.

Mr Adams has not received an invitation to the St Patrick's Day party at the White House next Friday, in contrast to last year when he was greeted as a statesman and welcomed personally by President Clinton. Mr Adams will have travelled on to Pennsylvania when the party starts.

However, David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, has been invited and will attend. He will also hold talks at the

White House with Anthony Lake, the National Security Adviser.

Any discussions with the Sinn Féin president are expected to be conducted at a distance. But he is still likely to meet Christopher Dodd, influential chairman of the Democratic Party and the strongest advocate on Capitol Hill of continued contact with Sinn Féin.

Sinn Féin was the only political party in Northern Ireland excluded when the British and Irish Governments sent out last night separate discussion papers outlining options for the Province's forthcoming elections. Sir Patrick Mayhew yesterday sacked two leading members of the Northern Ireland Police Authority who have led calls to reform the Royal Ulster Constabulary to make it more acceptable to nationalists.

David Cook, the chairman, and Chris Ryder, his closest ally on the body, have been removed by the Northern Ireland Secretary after the authority passed motions of no confidence in them last month. Sir Patrick asked the two men to resign during separate meetings at Stormont Castle yesterday. When they refused he terminated their appointments.

Sir Patrick said: "It was clear that the authority could not function effectively and efficiently under Mr Cook's continued chairmanship, nor with Mr Ryder as a member." Pat Armstrong, the vice-chairman, will become chairman.



Sir Alexander Fleming and the spore of mould, which was expected to fetch £10,000

Fleming's penicillin spore auctioned for £23,000

By JOHN SHAW

A SPORE of the original mould which led Sir Alexander Fleming to discover penicillin was sold for £23,000 at Sotheby's in London yesterday. The minute sample of *Penicillium notatum* is mounted on a 2in diameter slide. A handwritten inscription on the back reads: "The mould that makes penicillin. Alexander Fleming."

The original glass plate is preserved in Fleming's laboratory in St Mary's Hospital, London, but the scientist gave two tiny specimens to his assistant Dan Strafford, one of which he passed on to his secretary, Diane Huntingford, 49, of Tonbridge, Kent, who is now a schools administrator.

Mrs Huntingford, who decided to sell the example and invest the proceeds for her two children, attended the

sale with Paul, 15, and Zoë, 13, who are at Sevenoaks School. Mrs Huntingford said: "I'm delighted and very pleased it did so well. The children are at private school and this will provide for their future. They want to go on the stage and drama school is so expensive."

Asked if she had any regrets about selling the souvenir, she said: "Yes, I have slight regrets. It's an historic thing with a wonderful background but it's something I could never display. You had to treat it very carefully and that's why I kept it in a hat box. It was there for years. The children will have some money behind them now. I think that's the important thing."

The buyer was Pfizer of Sandwich, Kent, a branch of the international pharmaco-

tical company based in New York. A spokeswoman said the specimen was bought ahead of the company's 150th anniversary in 1999. Pfizer helped Fleming with his ground-breaking work, which saved thousands of lives during World War II. The bacteriologist shared the Nobel prize for his discovery in 1945 and died in 1955.

The underbidder was Eric Turner, who was acting for The Powerhouse Museum in Sydney, which is building up its collection of scientific items. He said the museum was interested in the specimen because Lord Florey, who came from Adelaide, helped in the development of penicillin with Fleming.

A spokeswoman for Pfizer said the company discovered how to mass produce penicillin.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Marriage perk ended for women in Forces

An exclusive privilege for women in the Services which allowed them to leave if they wanted to get married was withdrawn from yesterday on grounds of sex discrimination against men. Women who joined the Forces were previously able to give six months' notice to end their careers if they wanted to marry.

The Ministry of Defence became aware of the anomaly when a male squadron leader applied to leave the RAF to get married. Sqn Ldr George Findlay won £6,500 in an out-of-court settlement after the MoD denied him the same right as women.

Prince for Hong Kong handover

The Prince of Wales is expected to represent Britain in Hong Kong next June at ceremonies to mark its handover to China. Although a senior minister will also be present, the Prime Minister is understood to believe that a senior member of the Royal Family rather than himself should head the British team.

Adopted children offered lifeline

Thousands of Irish people sent to America for adoption because of the shame of being born out of wedlock are to be given government help to trace their natural mothers. Over 1,000 files discovered at Dublin's National Archive show that 110 children a year were sent to America between 1948 and 1962.

Most teenagers victims of crime

Most teenagers have been victims of crime, according to a survey published by the children's charity Barnardo's. An overwhelming 82 per cent had been victims and most alter their way of life to avoid it. Theft and vandalism were the commonest crimes they encountered.

Mad March hare a dying breed

A major survey of Britain's brown hare population by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee has found that numbers have slumped from around four million at the turn of the century to an estimated 820,000. The decline is blamed on changes in agricultural practices.

AC Cars calls in the receivers

AC Cars, the Surrey-based sports car manufacturer, has gone into receivership. It was announced yesterday. Price Waterhouse, the receivers, said none of the 90 staff had been laid off. Production was continuing and it was confident of finding a buyer for the company, formed in 1901.

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Woman who tried to smuggle child's body on flight was suffering acute psychosis, says professor

'Devil voices' may have led Beale to kill baby

By BILL FROST

CAROLINE BEALE may have believed she was possessed by the devil when she killed her baby in New York, said her psychiatrist as the 32-year-old civil servant arrived back in Britain yesterday.

Miss Beale, who was sent home from the United States to serve five years' probation for killing her newborn baby girl, was suffering from an acute psychosis at the time of the child's death, said Channi Kumar, Professor of Perinatal Psychiatry at the Maudsley Hospital in southeast London, where her treatment began last night.

Professor Kumar said Miss Beale may have heard voices in her head instructing her to kill the baby as a result of the post-partum psychosis she had developed. He said Miss Beale's ordeal had left her "exhausted and very vulnerable. She is still in a state of shock. I have visited the prison where she was held and it gave me nightmares."

She was said to be "safe, well, and resting" and likely to remain an in-patient for up to three weeks at the hospital while her condition was assessed. She is also receiving medication and an intensive course of psychotherapy is planned.

Miss Beale, who while staying at a New York hotel killed her child by placing her in a

plastic bag, arrived at Garwick yesterday morning after a flight from New York. She went through immigration and customs procedures, avoiding public areas, before being driven away.

Her return marks the end of an 18-month ordeal which started when she was arrested at John F. Kennedy airport in September 1994, and charged with murder after the body of her baby — called Olivia Ann — was found hidden in a plastic bag under her coat.

Miss Beale admitted manslaughter of the child on Monday in a plea bargain. She was sentenced to the eight months she had already spent on remand at Riker's Island Prison in New York. She was also ordered to undergo psychiatric care in Britain for at least a year.

The numerous court appearances led her parents Peter and Daphne, from Chingford, Essex, bitterly to criticise the US judicial system. Under US law, taking the life of an infant is murder. But under British law the crime is regarded as manslaughter.

Mr and Mrs Beale — who claim that their daughter's baby was stillborn and that she was driven to conceal the death as a result of post-natal depression — said Caroline's prosecution was barbaric and medieval. Their comments in-



Hanophy attacked Mr Beale as a big mouth

furiated New York State Supreme Court Judge Robert Hanophy, who said Mr Beale had "a big mouth" and that the couple's remarks "got under my skin". He ordered that deeds to two houses which Mr Beale put up as bail surety for his daughter should be held until her probation period was up.

Judge Hanophy, an American of Irish descent, has 36 years experience at the Bar and is one of a select number of judges allowed to pass New York State's newly-legislated death sentence. It was never an option in the case of Miss Beale, who was only ever charged with second degree murder and, later, manslaughter. Professor Kumar

said yesterday that post-partum psychosis was "an acute and severe condition which leads to alienation from reality and the patient can hear voices ordering her to kill her child. She might also believe she was possessed by the devil," he explained.

He said that Miss Beale convinced herself her daughter was already dead when she was born. She had also refused to acknowledge that she was ever pregnant.

However, Professor Kumar said that, given time, there was no reason why Miss Beale should not make a good recovery.

"This ordeal has left scars on her — a post-traumatic stress disorder. She is depressed and anxious after what was a very unpleasant experience."

Michael Dowd, Miss Beale's US lawyer, who travelled to London with her, said the pressure on his client had been intense. "It was quite unimaginable — Caroline used to shake uncontrollably in court, her legs couldn't support her."

"I marvel at her courage. She has now discovered a level of strength she did not know she possessed."

Miss Beale's last night family set about making plans for the return of her baby's body to Britain for a proper burial. The child was interred in a pauper's grave in New York.



Caroline Beale arrives at the Maudsley Hospital to begin psychiatric treatment

Newborn accorded greater rights in US

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

IF Caroline Beale had been arrested in Britain, as a native she would have been treated as a woman suffering from a mental disorder. She would have been given a medical examination at the police station and, as a baby had died, senior officers would probably have asked that she be seen by a psychiatrist.

The majority of police officers in Britain would assume that a woman in Miss Beale's position needed medical help and sympathetic treatment. "It is almost axiomatic for police to consider that a woman who has killed a newborn baby may be suffering from a psychiatric disorder," Graham Sandell, head of the mental health division at the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, said.

However, a foreign national caught with a dead baby in a plastic bag, as Miss Beale had been in America, would be treated differently from an English national and would probably be held in custody.

Mr Sandell said: "We make an assumption that a woman who kills a baby of less than 12 months will be suffering from some kind of mental health problem. In the US they act on the basis that the unborn and just born have more rights than we would accord them."

Jail for sex abuse canon who kept job

By TIM JONES

THE Church of England allowed a senior clergyman to continue his ministry while knowing he was alleged to have abused young boys, a court was told yesterday. Canon Terence Knight, 57, a former member of the General Synod, who assaulted seven boys, remained in his post for ten years after mothers first complained to his superiors.

Mrs Justice Ebsworth, jailing him yesterday for 3½ years, told him: "It is apparent that the Church took the view with knowledge of these events that you could still properly serve the Church and community. But I have to consider a wider aspect and that is the public perception of the abuse of the trust of children. It is a tragedy for the Anglican Church and for the congregations who have respected and loved you for your work."

Winchester Crown Court was told that Mr Knight, who became a priest at St Saviour's in Stanshaw, Portsmouth in 1975, preyed on boys after encouraging them to stay at his home. Charles Cochand, for the prosecution, said an 11-year-old was asked to do stretching exercises naked on the bed and a 12-year-old was encouraged to have a bath while Mr Knight washed him.

A group of mothers confronted him about the allegations in 1985 but decided not to take the complaints to the police after his superiors were informed.

Canon Howard Barker, spokesman for the Portsmouth diocese, said last night: "I can only assume that the full facts weren't made clear to the Church because this is a very serious, unfortunate and horrible set of circumstances."



Gibson: praised by Foreign Secretary

Diplomat dies after Nairobi shooting

By EMMA WILKINS

A BRITISH diplomat left paralysed after being shot on duty in Nairobi died yesterday. Graeme Gibson, 43, was recuperating at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Buckinghamshire, when his condition deteriorated unexpectedly.

His injuries had left him paralysed from the chest down but with some movement in his shoulders.

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, paid tribute to Mr Gibson: "All who saw Graeme after the dreadful shooting incident were impressed by the courage and cheerfulness with which he had faced up to his injuries."

"He was an officer in the best traditions of the diplomatic service. It is small comfort at this time, but we can all be proud of him."

Mr Gibson's wife Pamela, 39, had been at his bedside since the shooting in November. He had two daughters from a previous marriage.

The National Spinal Injuries Centre said that despite full resuscitation treatment, Mr Gibson died shortly after midday. A post-mortem examination is to be carried out.

£15,000 for sacked cancer victim

By A STAFF REPORTER

A FIRM that sacked an accountant after she was diagnosed as having cancer during her pregnancy acted with "appalling disregard" for her plight, an industrial tribunal ruled yesterday.

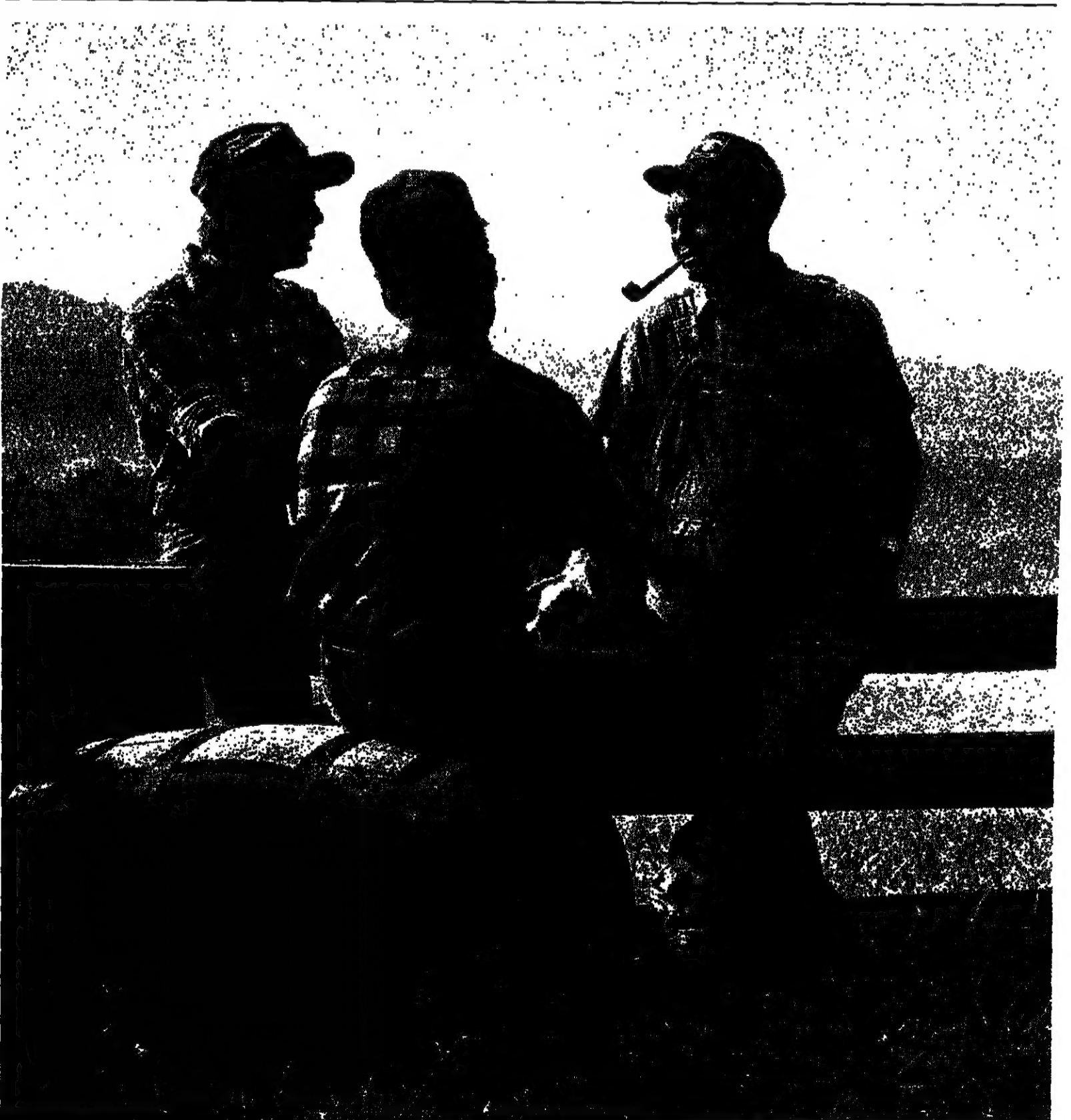
Carole Coe, 30, of Hyde, Greater Manchester, arrived home from hospital after chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatment for cervical cancer to find a letter telling her she was dismissed from her £23,000-a-year job. She was awarded £15,000 in compensation for hurt feelings and aggravated damages from Tee Gee Snacks, of Leeds.

Miss Coe, who now lives on benefits, must wait for a decision on whether her claim for more than £100,000 in lost future earnings has been successful. The tribunal, which last month ruled in favour of Miss Coe's claim that she was the victim of sex discrimination, had heard that the firm wrongly believed she was not automatically entitled to return to work after maternity leave because she had worked there for less than two years.

But at the Manchester hearing to decide the amount of compensation yesterday, tribunal chairman Jill Barshaw said: "The circumstances have simply taken our breath away. How anyone could have behaved in such a manner is beyond our understanding."

She added: "The circumstances in which she learned of her dismissal were aggravated, we believe, by the appalling disregard the respondents had for her medical condition. This was an injury to her feelings that would not have been short-lived."

No one was available for comment at Tee Gee Snacks last night.



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Head warns career mothers to avoid 'opulent neglect'

By DAVID CHARTER
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

WORKING mothers risk damaging their children's emotional lives if they return to their careers without carefully considering the consequences, a leading headmaster warned yesterday.

Roy Chapman, head of Malvern College in Worcestershire, said it was possible for women to pursue high-flying careers without harming their children but should only do so after a great deal of thought.

The Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference, which represents 240 leading independent schools, backed Mr Chapman by warning against the dangers of "opulent neglect" afflicting young

sters whose working parents are too busy to see them.

Mr Chapman, a former conference chairman, said that he was not opposed to women holding top jobs but he had seen too many children damaged by the neglect of their career mothers.

In an article called *Working Mothers*, Mr Chapman said: "It is possible for families to have a working mother and to have children whose emotional development is not stunted. But it does not happen without a great deal of thought... I would not wish to deprive mothers of the opportunity to go back to work. But it is those who have to make compromises who lose out by getting the worst of both worlds."

Mr Chapman said: "If there is any moral in all this, it must be that mothers who choose to return to work should do so without any pang of guilt."

Tony Evans, the conference's current chairman, said that there were three great dangers to the fabric of society: absent fathers; the frequency of divorce; and working mothers who neglect their children.

He said working mothers needed to realise they could not regiment their lives so they planned a limited amount of quality time with their children. "I am very sceptical about this quality time. Children just need time and you cannot legislate for when they will need it," he said.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Robert Harris on Balliolitis



When Chris Patten told journalists in Hong Kong that he "certainly" wanted to return to British politics, one could hear the authentic tone of Balliol ambition at a range of 8,000 miles...

Patten's circumstances strangely echo those of Lord Curzon, who returned in 1906 from being viceroy of India. Robert Harris, in *News Review* — *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

Father and friend give part of lung to save girl

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

TWO people have given part of their lungs to save a dying girl in the first operation in Britain involving living lung donors. The father of Clare Wildman, who has the lung disease cystic fibrosis, and her mother's best friend each donated a lobe of their lungs.

The operation, performed by Sir Magdi Yacoub, is believed to be the first in the world involving an unrelated living lung donor. Clare, from Mill Hill, north London, can now breathe almost normally after needing oxygen continually for the past two years.

Jude Harris, for 30 years a friend of Clare's mother, Averil, agreed to become a donor after doctors said Mrs Wildman she was not a good match for Clare and neither were Clare's uncles or aunts. Similar operations have been

performed in America but these have involved relatives. Adult lungs have five lobes. Donors who give up a single lobe lose about 20 per cent of their lung capacity but can still lead normal lives.

Once transplanted into the recipient, the air sacs in the lobe expand to fill the space in the chest cavity and function like a complete lung. Patients with cystic fibrosis, in which the lungs become congested with mucus and progressively damaged, do not need a full-size adult lung since they tend to be small because of their illness. Clare is aged 20.

Dr Margaret Hodson, head of the department of cystic fibrosis at the Royal Brompton Hospital, west London, who cared for the Wildmans, said: "You won't be able to run a four-minute mile after donating a lobe but you can do all the normal things like housework and gardening."



Clare Wildman with her father, Graham, and Jude Harris, who each gave a lobe of their lungs for transplant

ing a lobe but you can do all the normal things like housework and gardening."

Dr Hodson said donors had to pass a series of physical tests. They were also interviewed by a psychiatrist to ensure they had considered all the implications. She said 95 per cent of cystic fibrosis sufferers died of lung disease. "When you reach end-stage respiratory failure and you have had maximal medical treatment with physiotherapy and antibiotics your only

chance is a transplant. But the options are limited because of the shortage of organs."

Details of the operation, carried out at Harefield Hospital, west London, last July, were disclosed yesterday after a dinner for Sir Magdi given by the businessman Mohamed Al Fayed to raise money for research. It emerged that Clare has suffered a rare neurological side-effect of the drugs used to control rejection of the organs which has left her paralysed

from the waist down. Dr Hodson said: "Any transplant surgery has risks: the most common are infection and rejection. This is a very rare side-effect, not related to the surgery. It is very unfortunate."

Clare has to do breathing exercises and is on powerful anti-rejection drugs but her quality of life has improved and she is planning to go to college and to travel.

Clare's mother approached the Royal Brompton having read of parents in America

giving part of their lungs to their children.

Mrs Harris said: "At first it was easy just saying yes. I was very frightened as the operation got closer but there was no way I wasn't going to do it. They wanted to be sure we understood what we were doing and that there was no pressure on us. I just didn't want Clare to die." Clare's father, Graham, said: "They told me I would lose 20 per cent of my lung capacity but it would mean Clare would live."

Princess's stalker committed to hospital

A German doctor who has been following the Princess of Wales has been committed to a mental hospital for 28 days. The prosecution at Horseferry Road Magistrates' Court, central London, dropped charges of breach of the peace and obstructing police against Dr Klaus Wagner, 37.

Wagner had been led away by police from a charity function at which the Princess appeared last night. Nazir Afzal, for the prosecution, told the court: "He is deluded, he requires urgent treatment, he is a danger both to himself and the public."

309 forced out by Services gay ban

A total of 309 people left the Services between 1990 and 1994 because of their sexual orientation. Nicholas Soames, the Armed Forces Minister, said yesterday in a Commons written reply. The disclosure comes after publication of a review of policy on homosexuals in the forces, which found that an overwhelming majority supported the current ban. Mr Soames pledged this week to "fight every inch of the way" to keep the ban.

Temazepam ban ruled lawful

A government decision to stop GPs prescribing gel-filled capsules of the drug temazepam on the NHS has been upheld in the High Court. Mr Justice Judge rejected an appeal by the pharmaceutical company R.P. Scherer that the Health Secretary, Stephen Dorrell, had erred in law when he decided to ban its product from being prescribed to NHS patients after the capsules were linked to deaths and injury in drug addicts.

Navy drugs haul

The Royal Navy frigate HMS *Brave* has seized almost half a tonne of cocaine with a street value of £10 to £15 million in a joint operation with the US Coastguard in the Caribbean. It was the warship's third big drugs haul.

History protest

Archaeologists will join protesters today against the Newbury bypass, which threatens the remains of ancient settlements. Rob Young, of the British Archaeological Trust, said: "Unless we act our past will never be understood."

Breath test plea

A chef who drove to a police station demanding to be breathalysed was four times over the limit, magistrates at Cirencester, Gloucestershire, were told. Douglas Sinton, 37, pleaded guilty to drink-driving. He will be sentenced later.

Farmers' leader

Sandy Mole, from Reston, Borders, has been elected president of the National Farmers' Union of Scotland. Mr Mole, formerly vice-president, is also vice-chairman of the Scottish Agricultural and Rural Development Board.

Less of a blow

A man jailed for three months for blowing a raspberry at magistrates in Darlington had his sentence reduced on appeal. Troy Donahue, of Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne, who denied contempt, will serve one month.

Jobseeker waits for his ship to come in

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A DESCENDANT of the founder of the shipbuilder Swan Hunter is one of thousands hoping to win back their jobs at the yard.

David Swan, 57, great-grandson of Sir Charles Swan, who started his yard in Wallsend in 1873, has applied for his old position in the quality assurance department. He is one of 4,000 Tynesiders who have sought work at Swan this week after details of a big order were released by its new owner, THC, of The Netherlands.

About 1,200 jobs are being created by a £50 million contract to convert the 127,500-tonne oilfield pipelayer *Solitaire* for a Swiss firm. Swan, which built some of Britain's most famous ocean-going liners and warships, went into receivership in May 1993, when it employed 2,400 people. Until recently only 200 have remained, working on care and maintenance.

Mr Swan, a widowed father of two, from Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, was made redundant in the final round of job losses in May 1994. He described that moment as the "worst in my family's history".

He said: "I am hoping and waiting. There are a lot of skilled men out there just waiting to work. If I get my job back it will be strange to walk through those gates."



David Swan: hopes to get his old job back

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Leukaemia clinic given £30,000

Father of cancer girl sets up fund for sick children

By Carol Middleley

THE father of Jaymee Bowen, the 11-year-old girl refused a second bone-marrow transplant on the NHS, has donated £30,000 to the private clinic which stepped in to treat her for leukaemia.

A year after the Court of Appeal ruled that Cambridge and Huntingdon Health Commission need not fund his daughter's £75,000 treatment because the chances of success were so slim, David Bowen has founded a charitable fund at the London Clinic to help children in Jaymee's position.

Mr Bowen, 32, said the money, raised in an appeal by the *Daily Mirror*, was intended to help another child denied similar cancer treatment from public funds "and make sure the nightmare we went through does not have to happen to someone else".

Jaymee, who was given less than six weeks to live after being diagnosed as suffering from acute myeloid leukaemia, continues to do well. She received donor lymphocyte infusion paid for by a private benefactor. The experimental treatment, which involves killing leukaemia cells with chemotherapy and flooding the body with healthy donated blood, was not available on the NHS last March.

Jaymee has started her first year at secondary school in Hertfordshire, taken up roller-skating and learnt to ride a mountain bike. She has been eased off steroids and will start another drug soon. Although she gets breathless easily, she insists that she is happy and regrets none of the treatment she had.

As she ate pizza in a restaurant close to the family's new home in Sawbridgeworth, where she lives with her father, his partner Susan, her ten-year-old sister Charlotte and two-year-old half-sister Phoebe, Jaymee was unwilling



Jaymee: she continues to make good progress

another transplant was pointless, and embarked instead on the experimental lymphocyte treatment. The chances of a cure are put at around 20 to 30 per cent.

Diana Jakubowska, speaking for the Cambridge and Huntingdon Health Commission, said it stood by its original decision to refuse a second transplant. She said that the lymphocyte treatment had developed "at a great pace" since last March. Four children are currently receiving donor lymphocyte infusion at the Royal Marsden Hospital on NHS funds.

"Of course we are delighted if things are going well for Jaymee," Ms Jakubowska said. "But we are still convinced that we made the right decision based on the advice from the doctors at Addenbrooke's at that time."

She said the lymphocyte treatment Jaymee received privately had not been properly tested for children and thus was not available on the NHS at the time. "However, medical science is changing all the time. If we had the same situation again now, maybe the advice from the doctors would be different."

ing to play the media star. "I'm okay, really I am. What I really want is not to be treated as someone special. I'm just like everybody else really."

"At school people sometimes say to me, 'Are you that girl that was on the telly?' I just mutter 'Yes' and change the subject. I'm glad I'm still here and my dad had proved all those doctors wrong."

It was on March 10 last year that three Appeal Court judges, led by Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls, ruled that NHS funds were not limitless and that her local health commission could not be forced to pay for a second bone-marrow transplant. "In a perfect world any treatment would be provided no matter how much it cost ... but it would be shutting our eyes to proceed on the basis that we live in such a world," the judges said.

The commission had argued on advice from doctors at Addenbrooke's Hospital, in Cambridge, that Jaymee's first transplant had not worked and that her chances of surviving a second were only 2.5 per cent.

After a national outcry, an anonymous benefactor donated £75,000 for Jaymee to be treated by Dr Peter Gravett at the London Clinic. He reached the same conclusion, that



Air stewardess Andrea Carter modelling a dress by Bruce Oldfield, below right, who showed his collection on a BA flight to New York

Oldfield takes fashion to new heights

PASSENGERS on a British Airways jumbo jet to New York were treated to in-flight entertainment with a difference when the designer Bruce Oldfield showed his latest fashions at 35,000ft (Amanda Uppal writes).

The aisles of the Boeing 747 were transformed into catwalks as six stewardesses became models for the seven-hour flight, swapping their BA

uniforms for skirts and trouser suits teamed with silk over frilly bow-tie shirts. After changing on the jumbo's top deck, they paraded in a circuit past the surprised passengers.

The show, which was to publicise the opening of Oldfield's new shop in the West End of London, consisted of fashions for autumn and winter '96. It included his first ready-to-wear collection, from bright red sequin dresses to black and white suits.

The in-flight film was replaced by a simultaneous screening of the fashion show, complete with a running commentary from Oldfield. The climax came as the designer accompanied a model as she showed a £9,000 wedding dress. Nicola Peet, one of the models, said: "I'm sure the passengers enjoyed it."



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Shires earthquake gives residents cause for alarm

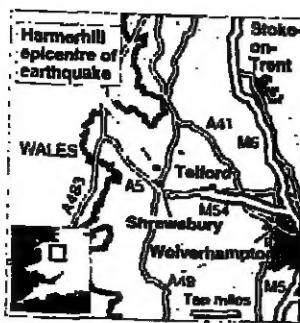
By Nick Nettle
TECHNOLOGY
CORRESPONDENT

THE tiny hamlet of Harmerhill in Shropshire was put on the map yesterday by becoming the centre of Britain's first earthquake of the year. Residents in towns near by scrambled from their beds as the quake, measuring 3.2 on the Richter scale, rumbled through Britain's most seismically active zone.

While hardly ranking on the scale of those that have devastated Japan and western America, the Harmerhill event did set off burglar alarms and a hamster in Shrewsbury was jolted out of his box into the bottom of his cage. Jackie Morris, his owner, said: "When I was woken up by the vibrations I didn't know what was happening and then I noticed that the hamster had fallen out of his little house."

Catherine Griffiths, of Castlefields, Shrewsbury, said: "The house rocked for a second. It was a faint rumble as if a juggernaut had gone past — but without the noise."

Police were alerted by hundreds of calls shortly after 11.45pm on Thursday. Inspector John Ransley, of West Mercia Constabulary, said many people thought it might



Harmerhill, epicentre of earthquake

be a terrorist bomb. "The calls came from a wide area including Shrewsbury, Telford, Wem, Baystonhill and villages in between," he said. The event, which lasted a few seconds, was detected by the British Geological Survey in Edinburgh. A spokesman said Britain could expect three earthquakes a year measuring as high as three on the Richter scale. More than 300 seismic events occur in Britain each year with Wales and the Borders being the most active areas. But the survey believes the country can never suffer anything bigger than an earthquake measuring six on the scale.

That is because the British Isles are too far from big geological faults or where the earth's plates grind together. The main concentration of these is in the so-called "ring of fire" around the Pacific. Nevertheless damage has been caused to property and people have been killed by earthquakes in Britain. North Wales and northwest England are particularly sensitive areas.

In 1580 two people died in London after a quake struck along a geological fault stretching from Kent to Belgium. The most damaging quake in more recent times hit Colchester, Essex, in 1884 and was said to have killed four people. It also damaged 1,200 homes and flattened a church.

The biggest British earthquake this century centred on north Wales in July 1984 and recorded 5.4 on the Richter scale, causing aftershocks around most of the country. In April 1991, the area was the epicentre of a severe quake as a 20-second tremor centred on Wrexham measured 5.2. It caused buildings across the West Midlands and Black Country to be evacuated, toppled chimneys and caused structural damage.

In August 1992, the British Geological Survey found signs of a 120-mile fault beneath the Irton valley in Wales, which may explain why the area is the centre of so much seismic activity. The fault runs from north of Carmarthen in a north-easterly direction.



Richard Weekly, a horticulturist at Kew Gardens in west London, on picket duty outside the main gates yesterday during a strike by gardeners.

Kew gardeners take to picket line

the dispute over pay. Botanists and horticulturists walked out in protest at a performance-related pay offer which the union said would lead to increases of only 6.5 a year for some staff. Paul Maloney, GMB regional officer, said from the picket line:

"The turn-out has been fantastic with around 95 per cent of our members joining the strike. We have also recruited new members and we have received a lot of support from the public who are signing our petition. We hope that the management will recognise

the strength of feeling among the staff and meet us for talks because we don't want to take further strike action."

The management has said that the performance-related element of the pay rise would increase average earnings by 6.5 per cent. The lowest fig-

ures referred to by the GMB would relate to only six out of the 154 horticultural staff at the gardens.

Kew, which is staging its annual orchid festival, was open as normal yesterday. A spokeswoman said earlier that other staff were not involved in the dispute and that many gardening staff were not in the GMB.

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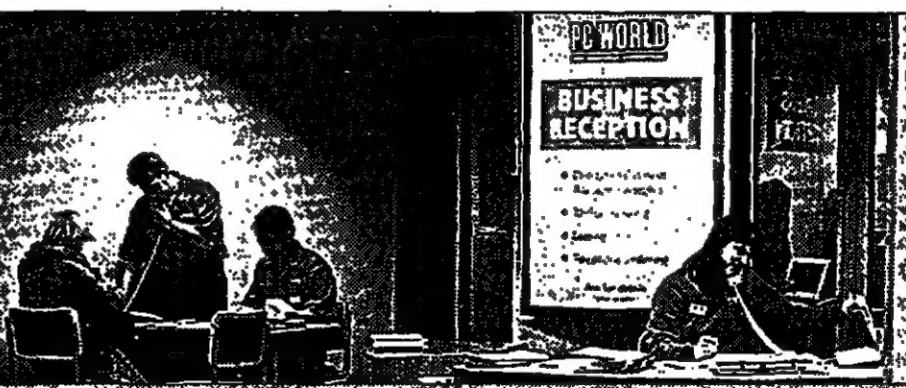
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Farmers go to court over ostriches

By A Staff Reporter

AN OSTRICH breeder took court action against a rival yesterday, accusing him of copying his methods. The Ostrich Breeding and Farming Corporation, which was set up in 1986, is seeking to take legal action against the Ostrich Breeding Company, which started its 100-acre farm 18 months ago.

Robin Higgins, spokesman for the group, which is based in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, told the High Court in London that the rival company, based in Swansea, was mimicking its offers and publicity. But a spokesman for the company said: "If they think they have a sole right over ostrich breeding and farming, they don't."

Ostrich meat — with the taste of fillet steak and less fat than fish — is being hailed as the dish of the future, and its supporters claim it will become as cheap and plentiful as turkey within ten years.

The group won an order for a full High Court action.

Newspaper reported to Lyell

By Richard Duce

A JUDGE referred the Daily Mail to the Attorney-General, Sir Nicholas Lyell, yesterday over an article that led to the collapse of an Old Bailey trial.

The newspaper apologised on Thursday for publishing details that had not been put before the jury in the arson case against Anthony King, a disc jockey who terrorised the family of his ex-girlfriend.

The trial judge, Recorder James Chadwin, QC, said: "Because of the seriousness of the consequences, while accepting the sincerity of the apology, I have decided it is appropriate to refer the matter to the Attorney-General."

The Daily Mail said that one of its journalists had failed to recognise that certain material had not been meant for publication until the trial ended.

After the jury was discharged, King, 25, was found not guilty of recklessly endangering life. He admitted five other charges and will be sentenced on March 28.

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THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Conservationists derail Aviemore skiers' train

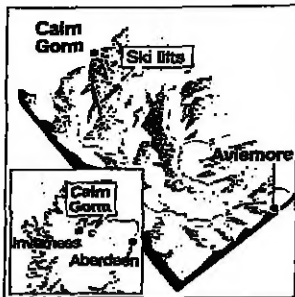
BY ANDREW PIERCE

A £17 MILLION plan to build Britain's highest railway station in the Cairngorms has been blocked by Scotland's leading conservation group.

Scottish Natural Heritage, which advises the Government on environmental issues, has announced its opposition to the project, dubbed the "train to the heavens". Cairngorm Chairlift Company, which wants to replace its 35-year-old ski tows, has said that the objections to the railway and proposed visitor centre could jeopardise the future of the Scottish skiing and tourism industry. The railway was expected to quadruple the number of summer visitors to 250,000.

The project was unveiled in 1993 by the company, which runs the ski centre about ten miles from Aviemore. It would have created hundreds of jobs and injected £10 million into the Highland economy.

Environmentalists fear that the development could destroy moves to make the adjoining land a Special Area of Conservation. Ramblers, mountaineers and the Royal Society for



the Protection of Birds have also opposed the scheme.

They fear that the prospect of hundreds more people swarming over the Cairngorm plateau, an area of fragile tundra, could wreak massive destruction on the mountain's flora and fauna. They could also disturb the nesting sites of rare birds such as the dotterel and the ptarmigan.

The one-and-a-quarter mile railway, one of the smallest in Britain, would carry 500 people every hour. The journey to the ski slopes would last five minutes.

The company revised its plans to try to accommodate the objections of Scottish Natural Heritage. It proposed to limit the size of the mountain-

top visitor centre and to introduce a ranger service.

Tim Whitmore, the chairman of Cairngorm Chairlift, said: "We had done all we could. The ranger system would have ensured that people did not trample on the sensitive alpine vegetation. I am so incensed by the objections I am almost at a loss what to say. We have been asking Scottish Natural Heritage what we have to do to satisfy them ever since we started working with their officials back in August 1994. What more do they want? This is totally unacceptable."

Magnus Magnusson, the chairman of Scottish Natural Heritage, said: "This has not been an easy decision. We have taken into account our duties not only for nature conservation but for the better understanding, enjoyment and sustainable use of the natural heritage. But the nature of this proposal has meant that too many uncertainties remained."

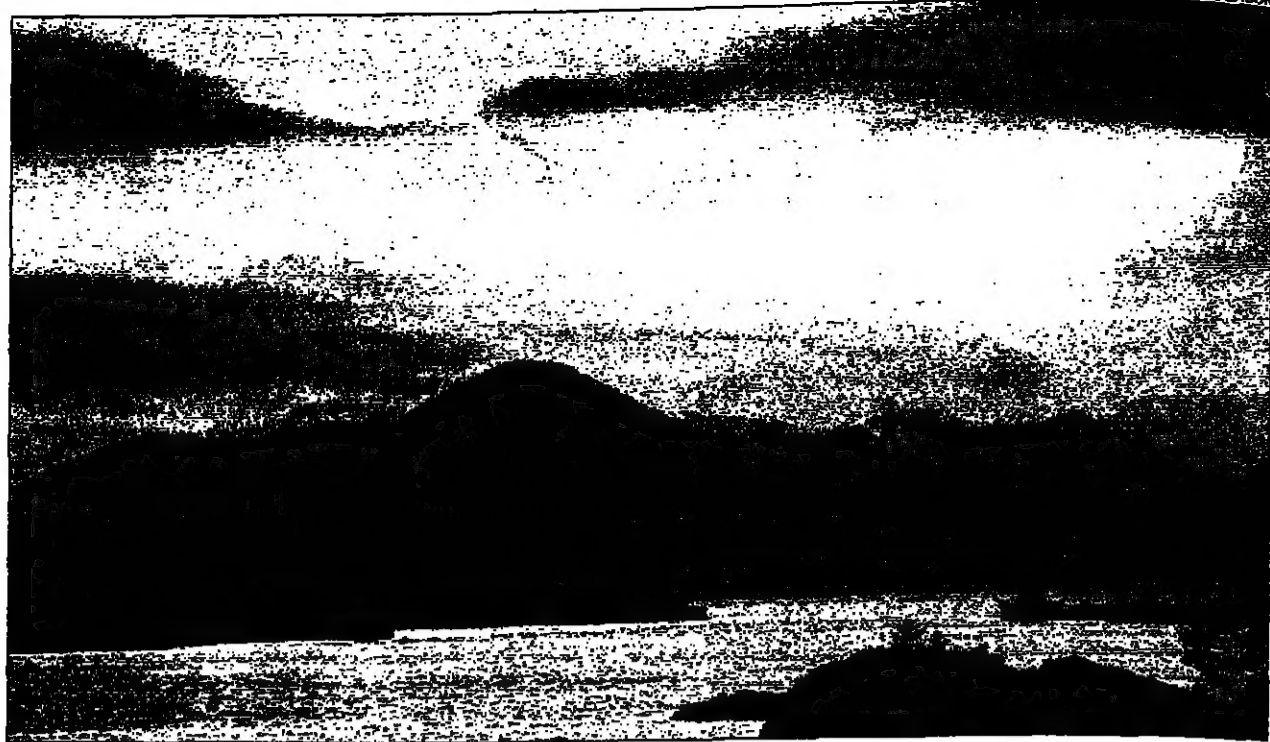
Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, may set up a public inquiry into the railway, which would run at a height of 3,600ft. The Royal

Society for the Protection of Birds, which owns 32,000 acres in the Cairngorms, has threatened to challenge the scheme in the European Court of Justice.

The Highlands and Islands Enterprise Board has expressed disappointment at the outcome as it had expected a jobs boom in the area. European funding of up to £5 million has already been sought. The setback on the railway scheme comes only months after the Aviemore Centre in the town itself was sold in a £7.4 million deal that promised to revitalise the area.

Desmond Bloom, the colourful new owner, has promised a £16 million investment on the 100-acre site and plans are being drawn up for 71 holiday chalets, a swimming pool, hotels and a 700-seater cinema. Mr Bloom, a former boxer and minder to Screaming Lord Sutch, is an enthusiastic supporter of the railway project.

The centre, which was built in 1966, has suffered from years of underinvestment. Mr Bloom, whose Premier Land Group bought the centre, will create hundreds of new jobs.



The £4.30 charge for crossing the Skye bridge was given legal backing yesterday at a sheriff court hearing

Sheriff rules Skye tolls are legal

BY A STAFF REPORTER

TOLL charges for crossing the Skye bridge were ruled lawful yesterday. Sheriff James Fraser rejected the argument of protesters charged with alleged non-payment of the crossing tolls when they ap-

pearing before him in Dingwall, Highland.

The court was packed by about 70 protesters who had marched through the town to the hearing led by a piper, carrying banners and waving flags.

Neil Murray, QC, counsel

for 180 people so far facing charges of non-payment of the £4.30 toll, had earlier argued that the charge was incompetent under several statutory rules. The New Roads and Streets Act 1991, under which the tolls were charged, was contrary to the 1707 Treaty of Union between Scotland and England, he said. The tolls were a breach of the uniformity of legislation of the two countries. He had also argued that the Scottish Secretary was acting beyond his powers in introducing the toll order in 1992.

Sheriff Fraser ruled in favour of the Crown in test cases against three of the accused, and refused an immediate right to appeal. The sheriff said that anyone found guilty after a trial could take up the appeal process at the Court of Appeal.

After a short adjournment the court was read the names of all 184 accused, with the

majority maintaining their pleas of not guilty. The trial of the first accused, George Anderson, will take place on April 11. The remainder were set for May 13, with an intermediate hearing on April 17.

Only eight people have so far pleaded guilty to non-payment of the tolls but sentencing has been deferred until the trial dates. As he left the bench after more than two hours, Sheriff Fraser told protesters: "Next week Dingwall will return to its normal humdrum — I will feel quite deprived."

The protesters assembled outside the courthouse before marching back to the town to their cars. One said: "Obviously we are disappointed at the sheriff's ruling but we are happy these questions have been asked for the benefit of the people of Scotland and those affected by the Skye bridge tolls."

Court backs change in night-flight noise

BY A STAFF REPORTER

THE High Court ruled yesterday that the Government had not unlawfully changed its policy for restricting night noise at London's airports.

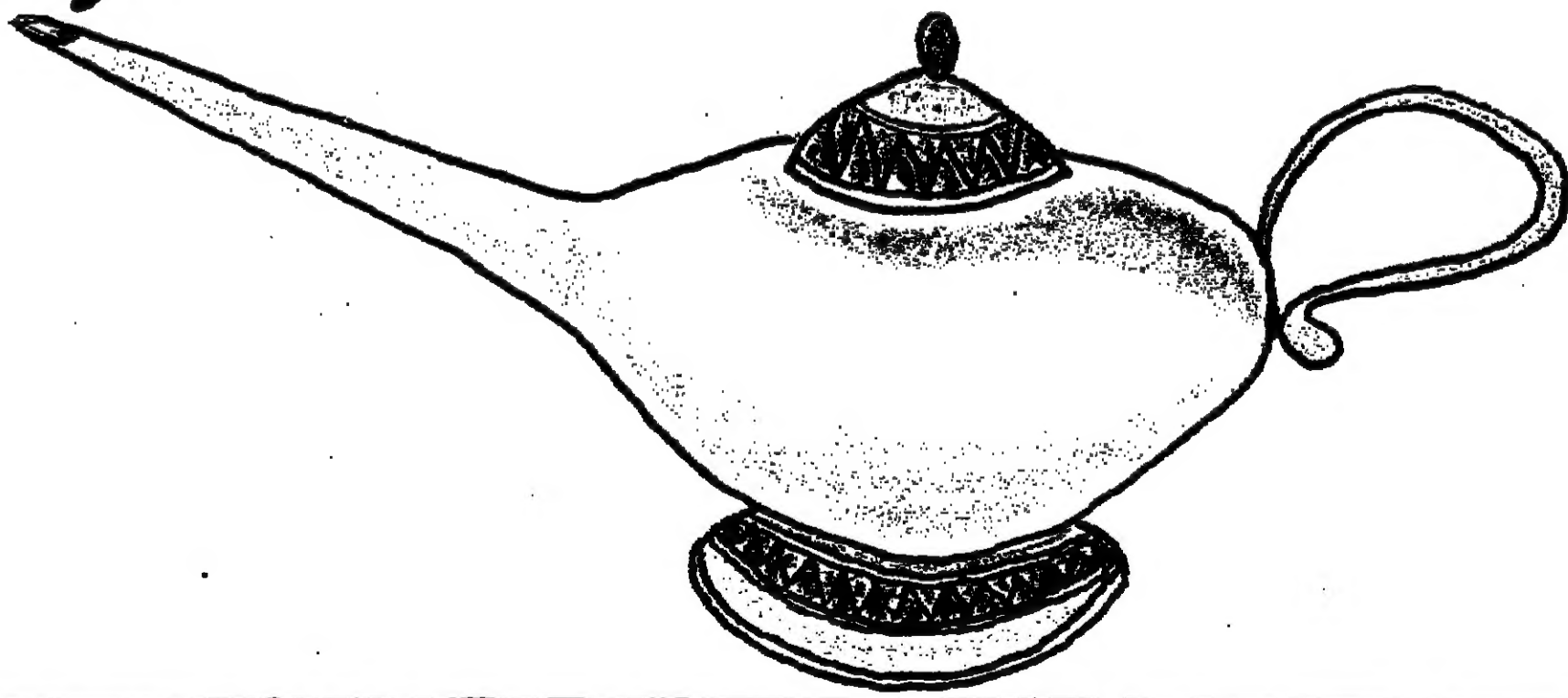
Mr Justice Jowitt ruled that the changes were not illegal, even though they could mean an increase in actual noise levels for residents, who complained that their health was being affected by sleepless nights. The decision was a defeat for six local authorities that brought the latest challenge in a long-running battle over night flights.

The judge refused leave to appeal and the councils are considering whether to apply directly to the Court of Appeal. The authorities had asked

the judge to declare that last year the Department of Transport had "unlawfully and unfairly" adopted a quota system that allowed for a blatant increase in noise levels, in spite of a 1988 undertaking that the Government would seek to improve the situation at Heathrow and Gatwick, or at least ensure that it got no worse.

Richard Gordon, QC, for the councils, said the Trade Secretary, while professing to adhere to the policy — taking as the benchmark for restrictions the noise levels for the summer of 1988 at Heathrow — had departed from it without giving residents a chance to make representations.

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مكتبة الأصوات

Clarke contradicts Major over call for referendum

By NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

KENNETH CLARKE and John Major were at odds last night over a referendum on a single European currency amid mounting ministerial anxiety about the prospect of a new rift in Downing Street.

Less than 24 hours after the Prime Minister had left MPs with the unmistakable impression that the Cabinet was close to backing a referendum, the Chancellor made plain that he had not surrendered.

In an ITN interview, Mr Clarke declared: "We did not decide anything on this yesterday." His remarks contrasted sharply with Mr Major's verdict that a referendum could be a "necessary step" in resolving Tory tensions over Europe and defusing the threat to marginal Conservative seats posed by Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party.

Sources said that Thursday's Cabinet had been the scene of a hard-fought debate in which Mr Clarke had

argued strongly against a referendum. He was said to have been backed by John Gummer and Sir George Young but was heavily outnumbered.

Ministers are worried about provoking the Chancellor, one of the Cabinet's few heavyweights, although they doubt he would resign in protest. One source said: "He will have to accept it, though he will probably do so with ill grace. Chancellors do usually win, but not always. He's won the day on ruling out a single currency in the lifetime of the next Parliament, so he won't have been totally defeated."

It is also understood that the Cabinet agreed to do more work on the practicalities of a referendum. Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, has been asked to report on whether ministers be allowed, as they were in 1975, to campaign for opposing sides, what the question would be,

and if other European matters should also be subject to a referendum.

Mr Clarke's intervention coincided with a burst of backbench feuding. Sir Norman Fowler, the former Tory party chairman and a close ally of the Prime Minister, said a referendum was not just a Euro-sceptic cause.

The issue deserved a campaign of public debate, which a referendum would allow, he said. But Sir Edward Heath, the former Prime Minister, and Hugh Dykes, Tory MP for Harrow East, denounced the idea.

Last night Sir James said that a referendum on a single currency would be an "empty gesture". He wanted a plebiscite that enabled the British people to choose between the original vision of a Europe of nations and the Maastricht blueprint for a superstate.

Letters, page 21

Scottish attempt to revive all-women shortlists

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR women will today put up a strong fight for a policy of compulsory all-women shortlists, which they see as their only chance to achieve equal representation in a Scottish parliament.

A passionate debate is expected this morning at the Scottish Labour Party conference in Edinburgh after signs that the party's pledge for 50 per cent representation of women in a Scottish parliament is in jeopardy.

Women members are optimistic that a strong signal in favour of women-only shortlists from Edinburgh will revive the debate at national level. The issue has been dropped since women-only shortlists were successfully challenged in January by two male party members at an industrial tribunal in Leeds. The National Executive Committee decided not to challenge the decision. Yesterday



Tony Blair at the Scottish Labour Party conference yesterday with Catherine Taylor. She is Labour's youngest parliamentary candidate, at the age of 22, and will be standing for the constituency of Angus

a senior Shadow Cabinet member said the policy for Scotland may have to be amended in the light of the tribunal ruling. "We will not necessarily renege on our commitment in the longer term but we might have to do it in a different way."

The present policy in Scotland is to achieve equal representation by "twinning" constituencies and choosing a male and a female candidate

for each double seat. The candidate with the most votes would get first choice of the two seats.

Speaking at a fringe meeting on International Women's Day, Carmen McAteer, regional officer for the Manufacturing, Science, and Finance union, said: "I have huge reservations about twinned constituencies both politically and legally. 'We must continue to de-

fend women-only shortlists. Unless there is some compulsory mechanism in place, gender balance in a Scottish parliament will not happen." She advocated amending the Sex Discrimination Act to exclude political parties.

Ann Penfith of the Labour Women's Action Committee, said that ignoring women would put the party at risk of losing the general election. "The Labour Party has a long

history of denying women's rights and it is still happening. What we must do is demand women-only shortlists. If they want to challenge us they can take us to court." A resolution proposing a minimum wage of £4.15 an hour was defeated on the recommendation of the Scottish executive. The party leadership is keen to postpone any decision on a minimum wage until after the election.

Leasehold law to be reformed, says Government

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE much-criticised leasehold system will be reformed in the summer, ministers announced in the Commons yesterday. A government Bill will be published to introduce the concept of commonhold.

Jonathan Evans, the Junior Lord Chancellor's Department Minister, told MPs: "This would give new rights to people in blocks of flats sharing services and facilities. Flat-owners would own the freehold of their homes while the 'commonhold association' would own and manage common parts of the building."

The announcement came as Jacqui Lait, the Tory MP for Hastings and Rye, sought to get a second reading for her backbench Bill on commonhold. Mr Evans said the Government agreed with Mrs Lait in principle but argued that more detailed legislation was needed and the Government would provide this in a full Bill later this year.

He was still speaking as time ran out for debate on Mrs Lait's measure, which goes back into the queue of backbench Bills. But Mr Evans told her that the Government was determined to bring in legislation to introduce the legal concept of common-

holding. He said: "The Government is firmly committed to the implementation of commonhold. Proper legislation should be introduced as soon as possible."

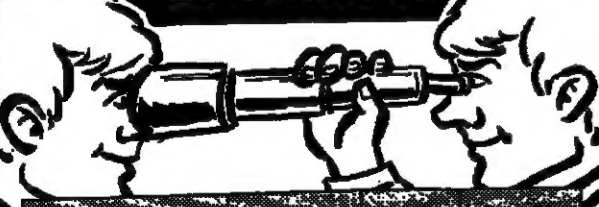
Mr Evans said the move would allow homeowners in multi-occupier buildings to own the freehold interest in their homes and, at the same time, provide a management system for the whole development. He said homeowners resented the temporary nature of leasehold ownership and objected to paying ground rent when they owned property.

Mrs Lait said the existing system had raised endless problems with maintenance and repairs. Leaseholders had no control over the size of repair bills presented to them, found it difficult to purchase the freehold and disputes often led to an "intransigent stand-off". She said: "There is a great deal of dissatisfaction with long leaseholding as a form of property holding."

The leasehold system was "under severe strain" and commonhold, which existed in many other countries, was a practical alternative. She said: "Commonhold is the missing part of English and Welsh property law."

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TECHNOLOGY GONE SANE

Wales's oldest priest urges Church to rediscover mission

BY BRENDA PARRY

THE oldest serving priest in Wales, who celebrates his ninetieth birthday tomorrow, believes the country should go down on its knees and confess to rid itself of its prevailing amoral attitudes.

The Ven Wallis Thomas, former Archdeacon of Merioneth, who describes himself as an extinct volcano, said that he regretted the falling numbers of churchgoers. "It is down to the Church to serve and bring in its congregations. I always believed a house-going parson made a church-going people."

Although the archdeacon officially retired in 1976, he still preaches regularly in and around the tiny North Wales parish of Llanelltyd, near Dolgellau, Gwynedd, where he lives, and is one of the most sought-after public speakers in Wales.

Tomorrow, elegant in ceremonial black, complete with gaiters, he is likely to upstage the Bishop of Bangor, the Rt

Rev Barry Morgan, when he arrives in Llanelltyd to pay tribute to a man who has been in holy orders for 65 years, longer than the 49-year-old bishop's lifetime.

Mr Thomas—who for once is not preaching—will be greeted with champagne, cake, flowers and a banner across the village hall declaring: "Archdeacon Wallis Thomas, 90 not out". The parish's affection is reflected in the acronym he is happy to use of himself: a "Wotcha" (wonderful old thing considering his age).

He has always insisted on being close to his flock. "I was an inveterate visitor and I would go in the evening when I knew I would catch all the family at home," he said. "It was fine until I found myself competing with television and Cilla Black."

Apart from a stint as secretary and chaplain to the Archbishop of Wales at St David's Cathedral in Cardiff

from 1938-46, he stayed in North Wales. He was rector of Barmouth from 1946-66 and Archdeacon of Merioneth from 1959-76.

He never married, having taken a vow of celibacy, a pledge which he came to regret. He has always been a favourite with the ladies: his church of admirers and the Llanelltyd congregation are popularly known as the "Wallis Collection".

If he were to have his time over again, he says he would certainly take holy orders, but adds that he would want a wife "to share everything with". He declines to oppose the ordination of women priests, saying many parsons are already old women; regrets the decline of the Ecumenical Movement; and advises young priests to try to love their congregation—even the difficult ones.

At Your Service, Weekend, page 3



The Ven Wallis Thomas, who will be 90 tomorrow

Common goals that give Christians a modern role

Credo



James Jones

HUGE billboards have invited us recently to watch football. The picture is of a stand filled with fans. The caption is "Songs of Praise". The advertising agency has clearly done its research and discovered that not only do more people watch this religious programme than watch football on television, but many more go to church than to stadiums every week.

This is not the only example of popular advertising borrowing positive images from religion to sell products. We have "born-again" cars, "evangelical" salesmen and multinational companies whose brochures boast a "mission" statement. While the Church agonises over the divide between the divine and the pagan, the secular is without embarrassment stealing and dressing itself up in religion's clothes. Not only does this show that the traffic between the Church and the world is surprisingly two-way; it questions the alleged chasm between the two.

Unfortunately Christians suffer from the disease, which afflicts so many, of talking down themselves and their ability to engage with modern culture. We are told that there

society to trace back its intuitions to the source of these expressions of moral truth, who speaks through creation, history and conscience.

Christians are in danger of losing their nerve by failing to recognise that there is still much common ground between the Church and the world. There is still a common law recognised in our civilisation. Indeed, no society believes that hatred is better than love, lying better than telling the truth, betrayal better than loyalty. Atheists and humanists subscribe to these values on the utilitarian grounds of social cohesion. Theists share them. Christians affirm them and point to the One who has given them authority and clarity through the Bible and eloquence through the exemplary human model of Jesus Christ.

We in the Church have to find and preach a new apologetic. Instead of imagining a chasm we must recognise the common ground that is still there.

There is a spiritual instinct in us all. Like the other instincts it does not come to the fore all the time. But when it does, the seeker at the end of the second millennium is still ready to hear the story and the propositions that God so made, loves and forgives us that He sent His only son into the world to the end that all who believe in him should not die but live forever.

The evangelical meaning of such a mission statement from a born-again believer will not, I believe, be entirely lost on this generation. Who knows, it may even one day evoke songs of praise on the terraces.

□ The Right Rev James Jones is Bishop of Hull

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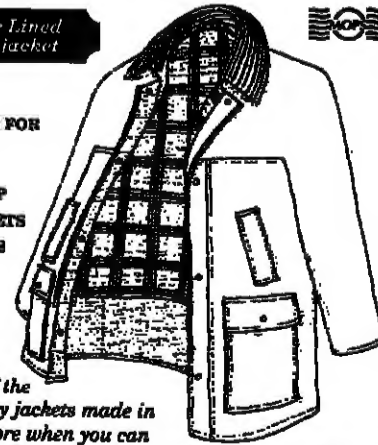
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Croat confesses helping Bosnian Serb soldiers in six-hour slaughter of 'troublesome people'

Execution squad 'massacred 1,200 Muslim civilians'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A FORMER Croat soldier in the Bosnian Serb army has confessed to participating in the massacre of Muslim civilians after the fall of Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia last July.

Drazen Erdemovic, 35, told *Le Figaro* of Paris that, as part of an eight-man execution squad, he personally shot and killed 70 Muslims. He added that the squad murdered at least 1,200 people in less than six hours near the town of Pilice on July 20.

Mr Erdemovic, the first alleged Bosnian Serb soldier to offer such a confession, reportedly agreed to give evidence to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague in exchange for assurances that he would not be punished and would be allowed to settle in the West with his family. Last Sunday, however, hours after speaking to Renaud Girard of *Le Figaro*, he and another Bosnian Serb soldier, Radovan Kremenovic, were arrested by Belgrade police.

On Thursday the U.S. State Department and Richard Goldstone, the chief war crimes prosecutor, pressed President Milosevic of Serbia to hand the men over to the tribunal in The Hague. Tan-

jug, the Yugoslav news agency, said Mr Erdemovic had been arrested as part of a war crimes investigation. If his claims prove correct, the Pilice massacre would be the worst single atrocity in Europe since the Second World War.

Mr Erdemovic, who is a native of Tuzla and has a half-Serbian wife, was one of a small number of Croats to serve in the Bosnian Serb army commanded by General Ratko Mladic. In January of last year he joined a special 80-man unit known as the "Tenth Division Commando" with responsibility for "eliminating troublesome people" and "sabotage behind enemy lines". The unit was led by Lieutenant Milorad Pelemis, who is suspected of involvement in "ethnic cleansing" in 1992. On

July 20, nine days after the fall of Srebrenica, Mr Erdemovic and seven other members of the unit were reportedly told to assemble at the military barracks in Zvornik. They were then taken to a state farm outside the village of Pilice. The soldiers were armed with Kalashnikovs and an M84 Soviet machinegun.

A first busload of about 60 male Muslim prisoners, aged between 17 and 80, arrived soon afterwards. In groups of ten, they were brought out and shot by the Bosnian Serb squad, commanded by Brano Gokovic. "When the men in the second group arrived in front of the dead bodies, they begged us 'Don't shoot us! Our families in Austria will send you money,'" Mr Erdemovic said. "Some insulted us. Others chanted 'Allahu akbar' (God is greatest)."

He claimed that he turned to another member of the squad, a fellow Croat, and remarked "God knows, this is going to rebound on us one day."

"Shut up," his friend said. "If you don't, it will be our turn. We are only Croats."

Mr Gokovic, the squad leader who had reportedly consumed quantities of bran-



Some of the thousands of Bosnian Muslim women refugees from the fallen UN "safe area" of Srebrenica who staged a protest march in Tuzla yesterday to demand international action to find their menfolk, missing since the enclave was seized by Bosnian Serbs last July

dy, "decided to use the machinegun to speed things up", Mr Erdemovic said. But, instead of being killed outright, many prisoners were merely wounded by the machinegun fire. "The injured begged us to finish them off," Mr Erdemovic said. The Serb bus drivers, according to Mr Erdemovic, "were terrified, but Gokovic made them kill at least one Muslim each. That way they wouldn't be tempted to confess later."

The massacre, he said,

lasted from ten in the morning until 3.30 in the afternoon. "I didn't count them, but I would say around 1,200 Muslims were killed," he told *Le Figaro*.

The victims were all reportedly men who, in order to stay with their families after the fall of Srebrenica, had not tried to escape but instead sought refuge with Dutch United Nations peacekeepers. They were then handed over to the Bosnian Serb forces "without a shot being fired", according to *Le Figaro*. The women

and children were driven away towards Tuzla and the men were taken to Zvornik.

Le Figaro's reporter said he met Mr Erdemovic and a Mr Kramenkovic, a Bosnian Serb who was also a member of the Tenth Division Commando, last Saturday near Belgrade. The two had reportedly fallen out violently with Lieutenant Pelemis, the unit leader, and last month they decided to give evidence at the war crimes tribunal and went into hiding. After hearing Mr Erdem-

ovic's confession, *Le Figaro's* reporter said he arranged to meet the two men the next morning and lent them his car to return to Becej. When they did not appear as arranged, he travelled to Mr Kramenkovic's home. There he was told that a police unit had arrived from Belgrade at 3.00 that morning to arrest the men. The house had been searched and the telephone lines cut. Their present whereabouts are unknown.

More than 7,000 people

from the Muslim enclave of Srebrenica are still listed as missing.

□ The Hague: The war crimes tribunal yesterday confirmed that it had charged former police inspector Milan Martić, former leader of separatist Serbs in the Krajina region of Croatia, with war crimes and had issued an international warrant for his arrest. Mr Martić is charged with ordering rocket attacks on civilians in Zagreb on May 2 and 3 last year. (Reuters)



Left-wing Mayors prepare to occupy Italy's seats of power

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN NAPLES

THE Italian elections next month will be the "last gasp" of the Old Guard before a "new ruling class" of younger, left-wing politicians comes to Rome from the provinces, according to Antonio Bassolino, the Mayor of Naples.

Signor Bassolino has been called the "Tony Blair of Italy" and a future Prime Minister. He predicted in an interview that the new leaders would be drawn from the directly elected Mayors of the big Italian cities, such as Naples, Venice and Turin, all of whom are from the Left.

Speaking in his office overlooking the port of Naples, Signor Bassolino, 48, said Italy's Mayors derived their authority from the fact that they were directly elected for the first time in 1993. The new rules were part of a root-and-branch electoral reform intended to give Italian politics a fresh start after the 1992



Bassolino: time for new "ruling class" to rule

"Clean Hands" anti-corruption campaign, which swept the Christian Democrats from power after 40 years. But national elections have still produced unstable coalitions.

In the grandeur of the Mayor's office, Signor Bassolino looks what he is: a wiry, energetic, working-class activist with a lifelong career in the local Communist Party mach-

ine. But the Communist Party is now the Party of the Democratic Left and he has won widespread admiration for his successful campaign to clean up Naples, revive civic pride and improve its image internationally.

He emphasises that he intends to remain Mayor until his term ends next year. "If they asked me to go to Rome right now, I would say 'No, thanks'... but then we shall see." He believes the Centre-Left, led by Romano Prodi, has "a good chance" of winning the election on April 21.

But the centrist leaders, including Lamberto Dini, the caretaker Prime Minister for the past 15 months, he said, are too closely associated with the "old Italy". Although Signor Dini "has governed well", the left-wing Mayors have shown "that they can run things better than Rome. We have forged a team of men who can govern the country, and who have earned its trust."

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Russia sends more troops into Grozny to flush out rebels

FROM THOMAS DE WAAL IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA sent reinforcements into the embattled city of Grozny yesterday to suppress a three-day offensive by Chechen rebels that has again proved President Yeltsin's vulnerability to the war on his southern rim.

Last night gunfire intensified as Russian troops mounted "search and destroy" missions against rebel fighters. Russian television showed armoured vehicles, including at least one tank, guarding the headquarters of the Moscow-installed Government in the centre of the Chechen capital to emphasise that the offensive by fighters loyal to Dzhokhar Dudayev, the separatist leader, had failed. It said troops were combing the city to flush out rebel gunmen.

A column of tanks and armoured personnel carriers came under heavy fire from the rebels when it drove down Lenin Avenue, the city's main thoroughfare, which is only a

few hundred yards from the centre and the former presidential palace. Buildings along the street are still in ruins after the aerial bombardment it suffered a year ago.

Grozny's main hospital, which was still functioning despite lack of running water, received several dozen new patients during the day suffering from bullet and shrapnel wounds, according to the doctor, Timur Alkhasov. Most were civilians and at least six people had died the previous day, he said.

The Russians estimate that 1,500 fighters attacked Grozny on Wednesday in a surprise dawn raid that gave them control of the southern half of the city almost instantly. Television reports said that 200 soldiers at a command post in southern Grozny were still surrounded by the separatists. Adopting traditional Chechen hit-and-run tactics, the fighters

appeared to be retreating before the Russians had time to inflict heavy casualties.

Even if they are pulling back, the separatists have succeeded in their main aim, which was to launch a spectacular attack right in the heart of enemy territory to coincide with President Yeltsin's announcement of a new peace plan. The Chechen fighters make up for their lack of weapons and numbers with rapid mobility and high morale. The battle proves that no place in the republic is safe from sudden strikes by Chechen fighters.

President Yeltsin has been unveiling parts of a new "peace plan" for the break-away republic this week, but has been vague on the details. Moscow is still refusing to talk to General Dudayev, calling him a terrorist, while the general refuses to talk to the pro-Moscow Chechen Government in Grozny.



An unknown painting by the Spanish master Goya, discovered in a disused room, where it was locked away for 100 years, delights Alberto Ruiz Gallardón, Madrid's regional president. The painting was found by workmen renovating a Madrid

Goya lost souls see light

government building ten days ago. It was propped against a wall in a small room where gifts to local government officials were stored. Museum curators

said the painting depicts the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary and souls in purgatory. How the 8ft by 6ft painting got into the second-storey

room in Madrid's regional government headquarters is a mystery. Inscribed on the back of the canvas is a message ordering its restoration at Madrid General Hospital in 1865. It is thought to have been painted in the 1780s. (A.P.)

Springbok emblem 'a sign of racist past'

BY INIGO GILMORE

PLANS by South Africa's National Sports Council to drop the Springbok emblem from the national rugby jersey, despite calls for its retention from the country's best known rugby supporter, President Mandela, have met a storm of protest.

A commission of inquiry found the Springbok "deeply offensive" to many because of past associations with racial discrimination, racial dominance and privilege. It recommended it be replaced with the King Protea, the flower already used by the cricket team.

To the horror of thousands of rugby fans the recommendation is expected to be ratified later this month. The team's symbol since 1905 could disappear before the world champions play Australia and New Zealand later this year.

Only last year Mr Mandela admitted he had supported the Springboks' opponents until 1993.

England team, page 45

Khosa chiefs end 'circus' by seizing skull for DNA test

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

JUST days after his triumphant return to South Africa from Scotland with what he claimed was the skull of a royal ancestor killed by British troops, Chief Nicholas Galeka has lost his head.

Khosa tribal chiefs have seized the skull which Chief Galeka claims is that of King Hintsa, the Xhosa ruler killed during the Sixth Frontier War in 1855, insisting that it must undergo DNA testing to establish its authenticity.

King Ntshenzwe Sigcau, Paramount Chief of the Xhosa, said 30 other chiefs agreed to take the skull to the police mortuary at Willowvale in the Eastern Cape for safe-keeping until tests are carried out. They will meet representatives from the provincial government next week to arrange for foreign scientists to examine it.

Chief Galeka claimed to have been guided to the skull on a farm in Scotland by visionary dreams.

But Mda Mda, a spokesman for the chiefs, told the gathering: "By taking the head we are preventing him from indulging in this circus, displaying his head about as he goes around. He claims to be acting on behalf of the

Khosa nation, so he should be happy to hand it over."

Chief Galeka, wearing a skullcap with long pieces of beaded cloth, red tunic and long socks, said: "I am not very happy with the taking of the skull without my permission. I have been suffering all my life trying to get this head back."

The controversy over the find in Inverness took a new turn this week when the Xhosa King refused to sanction the planned burial of the skull because, he said, it was not the head of Hintsa. King Sigcau said Chief Galeka's skull displayed a bullet hole above the right ear and was intact, whereas historical records indicated Hintsa was shot at point-blank range behind the left ear and his head was shattered.

The King has urged South Africans not to be fooled by Chief Galeka and dismissed his proud lineage claims. Chief Galeka insists, however, that he is the great-great nephew of Hintsa.

Chief Galeka has called on President Mandela to intervene. But the President's spokesman said: "The President feels the Xhosa chiefs are quite capable of handling the matter."

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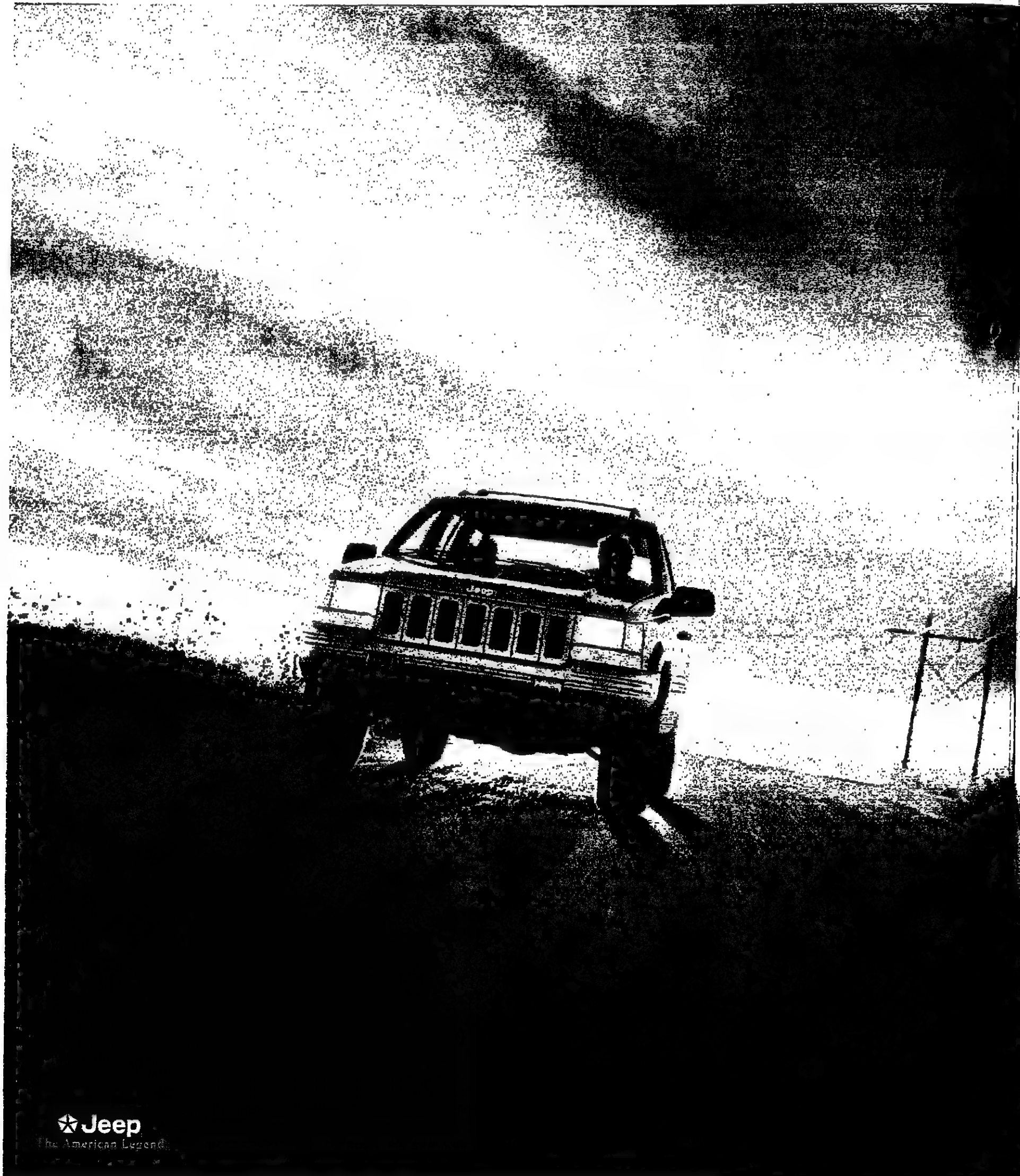
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Iran voters pass judgment on economic chaos

By MICHAEL THEODOULOU
in NICOSIA AND
MICHAEL BINTON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

PRESIDENT RAFSANJANI warned Iranians to brace themselves for a propaganda war with the United States and Israel over allegations of terrorism amid voting for a new parliament yesterday.

American pressure to isolate Iran for alleged involvement in the wave of suicide bombings in Israel would backfire, he said, after casting his vote at a Tehran mosque.

The US and Israel are urging Europe and Japan to join Washington's efforts to choke the crisis-hit Iranian economy, a prospect Hojatoleslam Rafsanjani must dread as he looks for foreign investment for his industrialisation programme.

The economy has been the main issue in a low-key campaign which has pitted conservative clerics promising to retain state subsidies against modernisers who back the President's free-market reforms. These have proved painful for many Iranians.

European diplomats in Tehran said more people voted than had been expected. Iranians can vote out a Government but not the system of rule: all candidates for the



Iranian women gather around a ballot box at a shrine, in the holy city of Qom, to martyrs of the war with Iraq

270-seat parliament were screened by a clerical body which rejected more than 30 per cent of the 5,000 hopefuls.

Nothing has eroded loyalty to the Islamic regime more than its mishandling of the economy, which Ayatollah Khomeini once dismissed as a

subject fit only for donkeys. However, Hojatoleslam Rafsanjani has surrounded himself with Western-educated technocrats who are at loggerheads with the poorly educated religious apparatchiks often promoted to top posts in industry and management.

Factionalism has given rise to paralysis and confusion in Tehran, of which the response to the Hamas suicide bombings in Israel is symptomatic. The official Iranian news agency, controlled by hardliners in the Islamic Guidance Ministry, hailed the bomb-

ings as "divine retribution". But the Foreign Ministry yesterday categorically denied any involvement in, or support for, incidents in "occupied Palestine", which it said were rooted in the policies and practices of the "Zionist regime".

Clinton takes lead in Middle East anti-terror drive

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT CLINTON will attend a hastily arranged summit meeting of world leaders on Wednesday in an attempt to isolate supporters of the Hamas bombing campaign in Israel and restore some momentum to the Middle East peace process.

The White House, designating the meeting "a summit of the peacemakers", said the US had been urged by Israel and Jordan to sponsor the joint talks at Sharm el-Sheikh, an Egyptian resort on the southern tip of the Sinai peninsula.

Mike McCurry, the White House press secretary, said: "The summit will discuss ways to enhance Arab-Israeli peace, to promote security and to combat terrorism... We expect that it will be a day of reaffirmation, both for the peace process and for the need to do everything governments can do in the international community to combat terror."

sources, about 30 leaders have been invited. The guest list includes President Chirac of France, King Hussein of Jordan and President Yeltsin of Russia. It was uncertain yesterday whether John Major had been invited, and whether President Assad of Syria would attend. But Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Qatar were some of the Arab states likely to participate.

The idea for the Sinai summit had been broached by President Mubarak of Egypt and was strongly backed by Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister. In a telephone call to Mr Clinton on Monday, King Hussein of Jordan also encouraged American involvement when he met Mr Clinton at the White House this week. Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, was said to have given his backing.

The Administration hopes that the gathering, and Mr Clinton's personal participation, will not merely send a universal signal of condemnation of the four suicide bombings in Israel, but will strengthen the political standing of Mr Peres at home.

The summit is also intended to demonstrate an international commitment to isolate nations that support terrorism, and to muster aid for Mr Arafat on the basis that he is trying to break up terrorist rings in the region. Despite a growing sense of dissatisfaction among Jews in America over Mr Arafat's apparent inability to deliver peace, Mr Clinton said the PLO chairman had "made some real efforts" to curb the violence. The invitation to Mr Assad

places Syria in a difficult position. He could refuse to attend, in which case his country will probably remain on the State Department list of nations which sponsor terrorism and his campaign to persuade Israel to return the Golan Heights to Syrian control will be undermined. He could attend and make no commitments, or he could participate and commit himself to crushing known terrorist cells in Damascus, which he has always avoided.

The White House and State Department had been considering the idea all week but, as recently as Wednesday, felt there had to be a productive outcome if the summit were to proceed. Finally, it was decided that the impact of Mr Clinton's presence would be "a physical statement of solidarity with the Israelis".

Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, will stay in the region to exploit what Washington hopes will be new momentum arising from the conference.



Mubarak broached idea for Sinai summit

Red Sea resort is a haven of hope

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

SHARM el-Sheikh, described in its leading tourist hotel's brochure as "our sunny Paradise", is far removed from the teeming slums and refugee camps that have bred Islamic terrorism. Yet world leaders will gather at the resort next Wednesday for their first global anti-terrorist conference.

Perched on the Red Sea's shores and coral reefs, 300 miles from Cairo on the southernmost tip of the Sinai peninsula, Sharm was chosen because of its relative security and its symbolism as a place where Middle East peace could be seen to work.

Captured by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War, it was returned to Egypt as part of the "land for peace" deal that led to the Camp David peace treaty in 1979, setting the model for the more recent

attempts to cement lasting stability in the region.

Before its seizure by Israeli troops, it had been neglected by Cairo. Since its return, it has blossomed into one of the most expensive and imaginatively developed resorts in the Red Sea area.

With its gleaming new international casino (out of bounds to Egyptians), palm-fringed beaches filled with scantily clad European sunbathers, and hedonistic atmosphere, the resort is light-years from the fundamentalist teachings and social ills that have encouraged groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

"Charming Sharm", as Egyptian tour operators call it, is a good example of peace working: Israeli tourists are among the visitors, flights arriving direct from Tel Aviv.

Oldest church in Christendom comes to light in Lebanon

FROM PENNY YOUNG IN TYRE

ARCHAEOLOGISTS in Lebanon say they have uncovered the site of the earliest church known in Christendom. It is hoped the discovery will give a boost to the country's tourist industry, decimated by years of civil war.

The excavations have been going on secretly in Tyre for the past few months. There are reports that gold crowns, plates and cups engraved with crosses, an altar and a passageway which would have connected the church to nearby buildings, have been uncovered.

The Cathedral of Bishop Paulinus was built in the 4th century in the port city of Tyre in ancient Phoenicia, now southern Lebanon, after the Roman Emperor, Constantine the Great, issued the ordinance of Milan on June 13, AD 313. This legalised the Christian religion and restored confiscated lands and property.

The Christian community in Tyre must have been quick off the mark because shortly afterwards, the historian Eusebius of Caesarea attended the opening of Paulinus's church and wrote down his speech, which included a description of the church's structure and furnishings, for posterity. It is the earliest known account of a Christian church, although Eusebius makes clear it was built on the site of an even earlier one destroyed during the Chris-

tian persecution. He describes the strong defensive walls enclosing the site with a magnificent porch facing east, covered walks, fountains in which visitors could wash, decorated gates, columns, brass decorations, wooden screens, marble pavements and a ceiling made from cedars of Lebanon.

It was the finest church in Phoenicia, he wrote. "I deem it superfluous to describe here the length and breadth of the edifice and its brilliant beauty. No words can express the magnitude or the dazzling appearance of the workmanship."

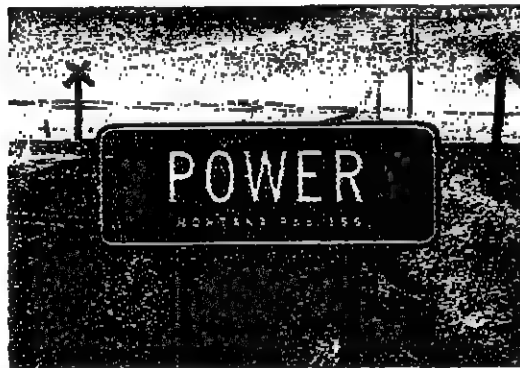
The site is tucked away in a back street in the centre of modern Tyre, surrounded by new concrete apartment and office blocks. It had been earmarked by a developer but antiquities experts sought permission to dig first. Visitors to the site can see the remains of the columns, plinths and marble floors, and it is just yards away from one of the largest Roman hippodromes in the world.

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US museum offers \$1m to lure 'real' killers of Kennedy

FROM IAN BRODIE IN DALLAS

JUST up the street from the spot where President Kennedy was shot, a museum is offering a reward of \$1 million (£653,000) for the "real killers" to come forward.

The Conspiracy Museum is devoted to uncovering what its private sponsors believe was an over-arching plot linking the three assassinations of President Kennedy, his brother Robert, and Martin Luther King with a collection of other foul deeds.

The museum has declared this to be the "Year of the Canary". It will pay the reward to anyone who is prepared to "sing" about the alleged plots. In a matter of days, 118 people have applied.

All but four have been eliminated, including those who were not even born when

Kennedy was killed in Dallas in November 1963. The four will be carefully evaluated, said Tommy Bowden, director of the Conspiracy Museum.

He hopes to find a greybeard out there, perhaps in failing health, whose conscience is gnawing at him. This person, perhaps a former CIA agent, must be eager to make a clean breast of the cover-up, Mr Bowden said.

He explained that payment of the money, donated from private sources, would depend on verification of the claimant's information.

There is, of course, the slight problem that anyone admitting guilt would be unable to spend the million dollars on account of being arrested. To try to avoid this misfortune, Mr Bowden has sent a written

request for immunity from prosecution, for what it is worth, to the authorities who investigated the Kennedy and King deaths in Dallas, Los Angeles and Memphis.

Mr Bowden, who once did contract work for the CIA, elaborates on Oliver Stone's theory in the film JFK. To hear him tell it, the CIA, FBI, Mafia, world financiers, warmongers, and certain White House aides were all secretly involved in a giant cabal to keep America's defence industries humming profitably.

This "professional war machine" saw the Kennedys and Dr King as a threat. Among their other misdeeds, so the theory goes, the plotters arranged the death of Mary Jo Kopechne at Chappaquiddick to keep Senator Edward Kennedy out of the White House and the shooting down of Korean Airlines Flight 007 to prolong the Cold War.

The suppositions are taken even further by the museum's main backer, R.B. Cutler, a wealthy retired architect. In his view, Lee Harvey Oswald was actually a lookalike impostor named Alex Hidell, a CIA-trained spy, and three men shot Kennedy.

It costs \$7, the equivalent of £4.60, to visit the small museum. On the way out, a book-stall has shelves of conspiracy volumes and, appropriately, copies of *Paranoia* magazine.

Animal activists score in sled race

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE world's most famous dog-sled race was plunged into controversy this week when a popular five-time champion was expelled for violating a new "dead-dog" rule imposed at the insistence of animal rights groups.

Rick Swenson was disqualified from the 1,150-mile trans-Alaska Iditarod after losing a three-year-old female husky named Ariel as his team passed the Yentna River about 100 miles into the race.

The expulsion of the veteran "musher", as the dog racers are known, provoked howls of protest from fans critical of the new rule adopted to protect race-dogs from overwork. The "dead dog" rule, instituted after two dogs died in last year's race, requires the disqualification of any musher who loses a dog unless the animal dies from an "external" cause, such as a collision with a moose.

Other contestants said Mr Swenson was known for the care he lavished on his dogs, and noted that he had never lost one in 20 years of competing in the Iditarod.

"He's the best dog-care person I've ever been around, and anybody here will tell you the same thing," said Charlie Boulding, another Iditarod contestant. "For it to bite him shows it's a screwy rule."

Mr Swenson's dog died as his sled ploughed through flood water on top of the frozen Yentna River. Mr



Racers urging their teams on in the 1,150-mile trans-Alaska Iditarod this week

Swenson, who was in fifth place, tried unsuccessfully to revive the dog for 15 minutes. Judges reluctantly disqualified him even though a post-mortem examination failed to establish the cause of death. "I can tell you, it was a gut-

wrenching decision for everyone involved," Matt Desalerno, president of the Iditarod Trail Committee, wrote in the local newspaper.

Mr Swenson declared that he would not race in the Iditarod again until the new

rule had been repealed. "There are other dog races in the world," he said on Alaskan radio. "The Iditarod has become a circus. A lot of people who don't understand mushing are running the race."

Small-time crooks fill prisons of California

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA'S draconian "three strikes and you're out" law has led to life sentences for twice as many non-violent drug offenders as for rapists, murderers and kidnappers combined, a new report said.

Designed to deter violent criminals or take them off the streets for life, the law has instead clogged the state's prisons with small-time marijuana smokers.

In the two years since it was passed on a wave of public anger over violent crime, the "three-strikes" law has meant life in prison for 192 marijuana users who would previously have served little or no time. In the same period, 40 convicted murderers, 25 rapists and 24 kidnappers have been sentenced to life.

The figures were obtained from the California Department of Corrections, which runs the prisons, but were ignored in its own progress report released by Pete Wilson, the Governor, at a press conference last week.

The law had resulted in the jailing of 15,300 repeat offenders. Governor Wilson said. He was seeking support for a bond issue to raise \$2.2 billion (£1.43 billion) that the state needs to build more prisons.

It fell to San Francisco's liberal-leaning Centre on Juvenile and Criminal Justice to point out that the new law is having a greater impact on non-violent than violent crime. The group also reported that 43 per cent of those sentenced under the "three-strikes" provision were black, even though blacks make up only 7 per cent of the state's population. "If one were writing a law to deliberately target blacks, one could scarcely have done it more effectively than 'three strikes'," Vincent Schiraldi, author of the rival report told *The New York Times*.

The state now spends more on prisons than it does on higher education, and one man, Jerry Dewayne Williams, is serving a life sentence for stealing a slice of pizza.



Kennedy: seen as victim of "war machine" plot



King: theorists link his death to other foul deeds

Dole bandwagon rolls on as rivals rebuff appeal to pull out

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

DRIVEN by the powerful juggernaut of the Republican Party, Robert Dole routed his competitors in New York and yesterday swaggered towards the "Super Tuesday" primaries with an iron grip on the presidential nomination.

Mr Dole, surmounting a vigorous challenge from Steve Forbes, the

multimillionaire publisher, took all 93 delegates in the richest prize yet of the primary season. Pat Buchanan, the conservative commentator who had plagued the Kansas senator in earlier contests, was left with just 14 per cent of the vote.

Despite his most convincing victory, the eleventh consecutive primary in the past six days that Mr Dole has won, there was no evidence that his rivals would with-

draw soon from the race. Entreaties from Mr Dole that both Mr Forbes and Mr Buchanan unite behind him to concentrate their efforts against the re-election campaign of President Clinton provoked unfriendly fire from both camps.

Mr Forbes, who had spent \$1 million (£653,000) to overcome the obstacles put up by the New York Republican Party to keep him off the ballot, said the Dole triumph was a

tribute to party machinery rather than message. Mr Buchanan, who had spent only four hours in New York and found little support among an electorate which views his candidature as too extreme, said he was not concerned about the loss but had turned all his efforts to the South. Nonetheless, both candidates left the Empire State weakened by a result that had proved the power of Mr Dole's organisation.

Despite a low turnout, Republican Party workers under the whip of Senator Alfonse D'Amato, the local senator, had driven voters to the polls through ice storms and snow to ensure a victory beyond doubt.

In a victory speech, Mr Dole turned his guns on the Clinton White House. "In January, Bill Clinton spoke to us from the White House and said: 'The era of big government is over.' Tonight New

York spoke to the White House and said 'Yes, and the era of Bill Clinton is about to be over as well.'"

Mr Dole still has a long way to go if he is to offer a solid alternative to the status quo in Washington. Polls from New York showed that at least half of the electorate agreed with Mr Buchanan's refrain that the ageing senator had no new ideas and Mr Dole lost the battle for self-identified independents to Mr Forbes.

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COMPUTERS, COMMUNICATIONS, MICROELECTRONICS

Media-friendly wives play powerful role in a changing political landscape

Marriages in Germany are affairs of state

BERLIN FILE

by ROGER BOYES



THE notion of a First Lady has been catching on in Germany ever since Bill and Hillary Clinton demonstrated, with mixed success, that a personal political partnership can somehow complement and keep pace with marriage. Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, already cranking up his election machine for 1998, has been attending buffet-guzzling parties to celebrate a book written with his wife. The picture album is supposed to flaunt their commitment to a united Germany and, presumably, to each other. It is not quite a Helmut-and-Hannelore election ticket, but there is no doubt about his wife's raised profile. Early rumours about trouble in the Kohl marriage have long since lost their currency.

Herr Kohl's rivals are having problems displaying similar family bliss. Oskar Lafontaine, the Social Democrat leader, a rubby bon vivant, has been publicly taken to task by Magret, his former wife, a

sculptress. Their marriage collapsed under the weight of his various love affairs. Oskar is now married to a bottle-blond Social Democrat researcher and his turbulent love life does not seem to have affected his standing in the opinion polls.

The real test of Germany's changing manners came this week, however, when the man most likely and most determined to unseat Herr Kohl, separated from his wife, Gerhard Schröder, the Social Democrat prime minister of Lower Saxony, has been married to Hiltrud — known as Hillu — for 11 years and they have become darlings of the media. It was the first major attempt to personalise German politics, to win elections through tabloid celebrity — and it

seems to have failed. Hillu, now 47, first met her husband on the election trail: she was the wife of a policeman and a passionate leftwinger. They became lovers and she married Herr Schröder, becoming his third wife. Over the past four years, Hillu has become a fixture on the media landscape. She appears on game and talk shows — once memorably blowing soap bubbles with her husband — and only days before the marriage broke up was given three pages of a glossy magazine to explain her vegetarian philosophy.

Herr Schröder, a 51-year-old former student radical who has the look of a battered boxer, seems to have found it all quite charming. Some analysts say that he captured his absolute majority for the Social Democrats in Lower Saxony only with the help of his wife. But now Herr Schröder has fallen for a blonde 32-year-old journalist.

Insiders believe the politician crumbled under the strain of living with his strong-willed wife. Because she opposed the live transport of animals, she decided that only vegetarian food should be served at home. Herr Schröder took to creeping to the local pub for a schnitzel, or packing in sausages at election rallies.

Hillu disapproved of many of his male friends. His wife and her two teenage daughters nicknamed him "Gerda", a woman's name; a family joke that began to smart. If he drank too much, Hillu insisted that he sleep in the spare room.

The critical question is whether Herr Schröder can keep alive his hopes of winning the Chancellorship.



Gerhard Schröder looks on as Hiltrud, his third wife, blows bubbles on a television show

'Euro-fighters' engage in battle of the sexes

The Social Democrats say they will decide only in the spring of 1998 who should be the official challenger to Herr Kohl. Plainly, Herr Lafontaine would like to have a go, but he failed once before.

Herr Schröder is the strongest alternative. Germany has never had a three-divorced leader before, but fellow Social Democrat Willy Brandt was divorced and proved to be electable. The balance of sympathy in the tabloid press seems to favour Herr Schröder, if only because Germans regard it as a basic human right to eat sausages.

One thing is for sure: Herr Kohl is poorly placed to exploit the embarrassment of his rival. The Chancellor's top security co-ordinator, Bernd Schmidbauer, recently left his wife to move in with his pregnant mistress.

A STRANGE linguistic debate has erupted here. Is the euro — the new European single currency — masculine, feminine or neuter. *Der Euro* would give the future currency a more manly feel, a sense of strength. But the purists say nouns ending in o should be neuter: *das auto, das radio, das bistro*. And the mark is feminine, so perhaps the euro which hopes to replace the mark should stay the same way.

This is just one of the headaches facing the PR managers, dubbed Euro-fighters, who are working out ways of selling the euro name. But they have been given a budget

of less than £10 million, barely enough to launch a new yoghurt.

The Euro-fighters may be "in luck. German zoologists have learnt that there is a species of Australian kangaroo called Euro. And it seems to fit the bill as a cuddly, lovable symbol of the new European currency.

But *Brehms Animal Life*, the classic zoological reference book, may make the money men think twice. The Euro, it says, "is intellectually underdeveloped. Even the sheep is more clever. Everything unexpected throws the animal into complete confusion."

Kohl finds it's good to talk

DISCREET lobbying has begun in Berlin and Bonn for the most sensitive of contracts: the installation of Helmut Kohl's personal telephone exchange when he moves his office to the German capital.

Herr Kohl rules by telephone (though he has denounced the mobile phone as "a scourge of humanity") and his bill runs to well over £300,000 a year. The French company, Alcatel, installed his current system in Bonn, but there are ambitious new plans for the

Berlin Chancellery which will resemble a giant Orwellian eye.

Herr Kohl's most devastating phone call in almost 14 years of office was not to superpower leaders but to the German astronaut, Ulf Merbold, circling the Earth in a Russian spacecraft. The long conversation sucked most of the juice out of the craft's batteries. The astronaut had to pay the price of Herr Kohl's call: for two days they lived in darkness and icy cold until they could stabilise the ship.

Kiev admits new Chernobyl accident

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN KIEV

UKRAINIAN officials revealed yesterday that an accident occurred at the Chernobyl nuclear plant last November, just weeks before Ukraine signed an aid deal with the West for the plant's closure.

A malfunction of the cooling system caused an increase in the radiation background in the Number One reactor on November 27, said Sergei Serajets, spokesman for Gosatomnadzor, the country's nuclear regulatory agency.

No one was reported injured in the

incident, which was recorded as Level 1 on the international scale of nuclear accidents. Mr Serajets said the problem was rectified the same day and the radiation level returned to normal.

The Chernobyl nuclear plant was the site of the world's worst commercial nuclear disaster, a devastating explosion in 1986 at the Number Four reactor.

Minor accidents occur frequently at Ukraine's ageing nuclear reactors but officials usually report them immediately. The November accident was the worst at Chernobyl since a fire in 1991 forced the closure of the Number Two reactor. It

came as Ukrainian officials were nearing the end of negotiations with the Group of Seven industrialised nations on an aid package for closing the plant.

On December 20, the group signed an agreement promising \$2.3 billion (£1.47 billion) in grants and credits to Ukraine for the shutdown, including the completion of two new nuclear reactors and social benefits for employees of the plant.

Gosatomnadzor had argued against the closure, saying that Chernobyl has seen the fewest accidents of all the country's nuclear plants in recent years and supplies 7 per cent of its energy.

Poland jails state torturer

Warsaw: A Polish court yesterday sentenced a former official of the Communist state security service to nine years in prison for torturing prisoners during the Stalinist era (Patricia Kozma writes).

The trial of Adam Hamer, 79, and 14 other men, all elderly, originally began in September 1993, but was continually postponed because of illness and the death of two defendants.

Aids gang thief dies in Turin hospital

Turin: A member of the "Aids gang", a trio who brazenly robbed banks without disguise, knowing that they could not go to jail under Italian law because they were terminally ill, has died in a Turin hospital.

Newspapers reported yesterday that Ferdinando Attanasio, 38, died at the northern city's Amedeo di Savoia hospital. "For months, Aids had

paradoxically protected them," said *La Stampa* of the gang. "Now the sickness is taking its revenge."

The trio repeatedly robbed banks in full view of security cameras, knowing their illness protected them from prison. The Government modified the law last year to give judges discretion to imprison criminals in the terminal stages of illness. (Reuters)

Catalans play hard to get with Aznar

FROM EDWARD OWEN IN MADRID

THE cartoon in yesterday's *La Vanguardia*, the Barcelona newspaper, showed José María Aznar, leader of the conservative Popular Party, staring to chisel away at a block of ice that contained an implacable Jordi Pujol, the Catalan nationalist leader.

If Señor Aznar is to govern Spain after his slim victory — 20 seats short of a majority — in last Sunday's elections, he must have the support of Señor Pujol and the votes of his deputies in the Madrid parliament.

With most Spaniards wondering who is running their country after the Socialists' defeat, Rodrigo Rato, nominated by Señor Aznar to negotiate a solution, reported little progress after his first round of talks.

"We can say that two questions have been tackled," said Señor Rato, who hopes to be Finance Minister in a Popular Party Government. "The general committees of the congress and the senate, and the search for a majority that will support a new Government. With respect to the first, things have been more concrete than with the second."

After four days of talks with Catalan, Canary Islands and Valencia nationalists, as well as the Socialists, Señor Rato said there had been consensus which gave hope for a deal.

"There was an ample agreement, more than a parliamentary majority, on European policies, the welfare state, the development of the autonomous regions and with regard to terrorism," he said.

He added that the Popular Party did not rule out any formula, the main consideration being maximum stability for the country.

Señor Pujol has indicated that the Catalans, with 16 seats, would give the Popular Party "governmentability", but not join a coalition.

The Basques, with five seats, were also conciliatory, but both will demand key concessions.

The Popular Party has until the end of this month to form a Government with the vital investiture vote for Señor Aznar expected at the beginning of April.

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OPINION

Richard Eyre's greatest legacy to Trevor Nunn is a National Theatre that was never 'in crisis'



THEATRE 1

A quirky South African twist on the Robinson Crusoe story comes from Theatre de Complicite

THE TIMES ARTS

THEATRE 2

... while in Glasgow the Citizens stages another grimly realistic novel by Irvine Welsh



RISING STAR

What's a talented 20-year-old actress doing playing a character called the Acid Queen?

The oddest thing about the appointment of Trevor Nunn to run the National Theatre has been the hostility of so many journalists. Three reasons suggest themselves. The first is "runners and riders for the National" articles published over the past year. Nunn's name never appeared once — until the rumours started flying last month.

The second is the old British defect: we hate winners. And in the game of theatre, Trev is the biggest winner of all. He has amassed a vast fortune. It's just not fair, darlings, is it?

Finally, there's ageism. Nunn is 56, whereas his chief rivals are fresh out of primary school. Critics love calling for "new blood". Then, when things go hopelessly wrong, they point to "inevitable". That's called having it both ways. It's also called journalism.

So much for the scribbles. What of Nunn? He has some known problems ahead: how to balance the National's text-based

No alarums and excursions, please

tradition with demands by younger audiences for more "physical theatre": how to retain the country's top actors for a pitance; how to attract more ethnically diverse audiences; and, chiefly, how to nurture new playwrights capable of changing the world — or at least the world inside our heads.

If he is sane, Nunn will emulate the methods of his predecessor. The most difficult trick in the arts is to sustain serenely a solid record of success. Richard Eyre did that. No whingeing. No "National in crisis" headlines. No flouncing off to the regions. No daft mega-million-pound projects. Just a determination to run three theatres so well that actors could get on with acting, directors with directing, audiences with enjoying.

Such people are the softly-softly geniuses of the arts world. Other examples are Clive Gillingham, the

manager who has cannily steered the London Symphony Orchestra to glory while other orchestras floundered, and Brian McMaster, who has quietly eased the Edinburgh Festival back into the premier league of world culture.

I wonder whether Nunn is capable of being a softly-softly genius. Perhaps. After all, the only thing he still has to prove is that he can display other directors' talents with as much flair as he has displayed his own.

And now, a warning. The Curse of the Anniversary has struck again. For new readers — and of course for very old readers who can't quite remember — I shall explain.

The Curse of the Anniversary afflicts creative geniuses exactly 50 years after their births and deaths — or after the premiere of a



RICHARD MORRISON

magnum opus — and every 50 years thereafter. This is how it happens. First, some bright spark says: "Hey! It's exactly 400 years since Sir Clodhopper Noddle, author of *Ye Confessions of Ye Randy*

Plumber, died of the plague. Should we not celebrate by staging the entire work?"

And off he goes with his chums to do exactly that. But human originality being what it is (ie, non-existent for 98 per cent of the time), some 29 other theatre groups have had the same notion. Thus the entire potential audience for *Ye Confessions*, approximately 17 people, is split 29 ways — which, apart from anything else, makes for a most vulgar fraction.

Meanwhile, scores of American academics jostle to produce the definitive biography of Sir Clodhopper. Radio 3 presents Alec McCowen reading Noddle's complete poetic works in 239 instalments at 11.55pm each evening. Sir Simon Rattle devises a concert series, *Towards the Noddle*, which reveals fascinating parallels between Sir Clodhopper and Karlheinz

Stockhausen. And famous newspaper columnists immerse themselves in encyclopaedias for all of 15 minutes at a time in order to produce 800-word articles called "Why Oh Why Can't Modern Britain Produce More Noddles?"

Yes, to see the Curse of the Anniversary in action is an 'orrible thing. And the result? Inevitably it is the opposite of what its participants had intended. Weeks before the anniversary day, the punters are heartily sick of Noddle. Indeed, some minor geniuses never recover from an anniversary. Who wants to hear another note of Purcell after being zapped by ode after ode in 1995?

Well, the Curse has struck again. And how. Keen fans of Mendelssohn's music will know that on August 26, 1846, Queen Victoria's favourite composer came to Birmingham Town Hall

and conducted the premiere of his oratorio *Elijah*. So to mark the 150th anniversary of that event a Coventry-based choir has booked Birmingham Town Hall for a gala performance of the work.

Good luck to them. They will need it. For on the same night in Symphony Hall — not half a mile away — the grandest of British maestros, Sir Neville Marriner, will be summoning his Academy of St Martin in the Fields for another concert. And which work has Sir Nev chosen to conduct? *Elijah*, naturally.

Brilliant planning. But there's more. Music-loving Brummies actually have no need to go out at all if they want to hear *Elijah* performed on the 15th anniversary of its premiere. Guess which oratorio Radio 3 is proposing to broadcast that night, live from the Proms at the Albert Hall. Here's a clue. It begins with E, and ends with "oh no, not another one".

And people wonder why the classical music world is in financial disarray.

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

NICOLA HUGHES

Profession: Dancer, singer, actress. "I don't want to be stuck in one category. I can do everything," says Hughes exuberantly.

Age: 20

Who is she? The Acid Queen, the drug-crazed hooker played on screen by Tina Turner, in the West End production of *Tommy*. In real life, Hughes is charmingly unlike her character, combining slender elegance with youthful bounce.

On the Acid Queen: "She is mad, seductive, scary. I haven't known any drug addicts, so I've tried concentrating on needing something desperately. But really I just get out there and hit the character on stage."

First steps? Hughes comes from Loughborough. She started dancing at the age of three, with the encouragement of her mother, who, raising her daughters single-handedly, made sure that each of them pursued a hobby. So, while Hughes's elder sister got into the England team for athletics, intermediate, Hughes trotted up the road to dance school.

And then? When she was 11, she gained a place at a ballet and drama school. At 17, she had a go at an open audition. "Within three weeks I was leaving school, moving to London and appearing in *Crazy for You*."

Why does she work in musicals? "My face lights up just thinking about it," she says. "When an audience claps and you've given it your best shot, that's a beautiful feeling. I originally wanted to join the black Harlem Ballet Theatre in New York, but I'm a bit of an extrovert and you can give it more in musicals. I have all this energy bursting out of me."

Any terrible moments? "Plenty. One evening in *Crazy for You*, my wig fell off, leaving me with mink lights flashing all over my head, parading around in the chorus line looking like an android."

Her future plans: "I go with the flow. I'd love to play lots of leading musical roles, pursue the singing which — unlike dancing — gets better with age. Maybe do an album." She has also been acting in a pilot BBC sitcom that should come out this year.

On herself: "I like having a laugh. I'm not quiet. But after a three-hour show, who wants to go and boogie? My idea of fun is going home. I love gardening: me, the cats and my little Flynn."

KATE BASSETT



THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale on *Crusoe* revisited; plus more Irvine Welsh

The weak end starts here

Foe
West Yorkshire
Playhouse, Leeds

If you think of Robinson Crusoe as the 17th-century version of one of Ayckbourn's maddeningly cheerful DIY fanatics, Theatre de Complicite's latest effort should convert you. Played by Hannes Flaschberger as a morose cove who would be flung out of Cardboard City for being underdressed, he spends his days performing two pointless rituals. Either he sits staring out to sea, in case cannibals appear on the horizon, or he moves rocks from point A to point B, aided by Patrice Naiambana's even more silent and inscrutable Friday.

Complicite has ventured far and wide in its search for quirky, resonant tales. Indeed, several recent successes have been derived from writers most people have barely heard of, Daniel Kharms and Bruno Schulz among them. This time, the company has turned to the better-known J.M. Coetzee, who lives and works in Cape Town. Watching the white master and his black serf in their awful, enervating isolation, you are inevitably reminded of South Africa in the last days of apartheid, when *Foe* was written.

But this is far from the only thought the play provokes. In fact, Mark Wheatley's adaptation and Annie Castledine and Marcello Magni's co-production churn your brain cells more thoroughly than your less elevated parts. Even with a charismatic Kathryn Hunter as protagonist, narrator and permanent presence on Peter Mumford's ramshackle stick-and-stone set, Complicite has trouble turning deconstruction into drama.



Patrice Naiambana (Friday), Hannes Flaschberger (Crusoe) and Kathryn Hunter (Susan Barton) in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*

Hunter is Susan Barton, a castaway who lands on the island 15 years after Crusoe, as he styles himself, became its supreme. She spends Act 1 mostly boggling at a silence that, since he says little and Friday's tongue has been cut out by slavers, is broken mainly by shrieking gales. Act II kills off Crusoe, and brings Susan and Friday to London, where they fall into the clutches of Daniel Foe or Defoe, in Rob Pickavance's slanderous but strong performance a supercilious leech mainly interested in sucking a good,

saleable story out of facts he finds disappointingly banal. The play is largely about cheating people of their voices and hence of their power to be themselves. That is obviously the case with Naiambana's Friday, who can chant and grunt and dance a bit, but like his South African descendants, is wrongly assumed to be empty inside. But Crusoe is a man too damaged to be able to tell his story, and Susan, who wants only to recount the truth, falls victim to London's book-packaging industry. What she describes is an

island existence in which every day was bleak and boring: "No strange fruits, no cannibals, only a woman cowering from the wind." But that does not appeal to the debt-ridden Foe, symbolically perched on a towering stool. For him, it is a case of *Robinson Crusoe* or bust. Susan burns up the theme a little too neatly: "Every time you close your ears to me you rob me of my freedom, just as the slavers robbed Friday of his."

Complicite's work evolves as it runs, and by late-April, when it arrives at the Young Vic, *Foe* may have become crisper, more accessible. Something certainly needs doing — expansion or excision — about the young woman who appears from nowhere to claim she is Susan's daughter. At the moment she is dull and distracting. And an ending that is interestingly mysterious on the page becomes irritatingly baffling on the stage. Better, surely, to cut cleanly to Friday's terrible last yowl. That is truthful, dramatic, suggestive and everything else *Foe* as a whole could and should be.

RECITAL

Dessert songs

IF MUSIC be the food of love, then Sylvia McNair is a cordon bleu chef. She crooned her way through a Purcell ditty as a sort of pre-concert seduction, then sank into *Andie Musik*, the first of a group of Schubert songs.

But, lest the appetite should sicken and so die, McNair had decided to share the platform not only with her keen-eyed and ever perceptive pianist, Roger Vignoles, but also with clarinetist Andrew Marriner and cellist Paul Watkins. After a group of limply infected Italian songs by Schubert, McNair and Marriner turned to *The Shepherd on the Rock*.

McNair/Vignoles
Wigmore Hall

After a gently poised miniature cadenza, the clarinet provided a warm current of air on which the voice could float in its final spring song. Watkins's task was to add his cello's voice to *Four Songs* by André Previn, receiving their UK premiere. These settings of poems by Toni Morrison are as uneven as they are varied, moving from an austere, barely tonal duet between cello and soprano called *Mercy*, through a sparky jazz number called *I don't need no man*, and on to *In this soft place and I am as you see*, which I found as musically indeterminate as they were verbally rapid.

McNair's satiny soprano gives its own distinctive gloss to the French repertoire. The voice came into its own as the *ingenue* teller of tales for Bizet's *Ladybird*; warmed to the arrival of spring in *Chanson d'Avril*, and revelled in the sheer sweetness and light of the *Tarantelle*.

HILARY FINCH

Welsh dragons

Marabou Stork
Nightmares
Citizens, Glasgow

FIVE young faces stare out from hoardings across the country: the damaged and doomed characters of Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting*. Originally a book, it is now a film, and in between those two states a play that began its life at the Citizens.

I daresay *Marabou Stork Nightmares*, Welsh's second novel, again dramatised and directed by Harry Gibson, will follow the route of the first. It is a deeper, denser, altogether more serious work, and while, inevitably, Gibson has had to leave out many incidents, catastrophes, and even some killings, the anguish of the hero, Roy Strang, is brought across with electrifying intensity. As is the different anguish of the little girl he helps to gang-rape.

After the director's credit in the programme come the names of the designer (Suzanne Field) and lighting designer (Michael Lancaster), who vividly capture the shifting, interacting landscapes of Roy's memory, fantasy and grim actuality. And below their names comes a credit I have never seen before: "The Violence" by Denis Agnew. His contribution certainly includes the street fights of the Hibs supporters Roy gangs up with, but the sex is also uncomfortably violent. Not only Kirsty's rape, dimly seen happening in the back of a van, but the forced sex that an

uncle inflicted upon Roy as a child — and which, rather glibly, is made to take the blame for what follows.

Welsh writes about people trapped in a terrible world where violence begets violence, and to reveal feelings is to have your face smashed. But where the junkies in *Trainspotting* live in an eternal present, Roy reveals the significant griefs and marvels of a lifetime interlocking with dread as he lies comatose in a hospital ward.

Played with a gritty, gutsy realism by James Cunningham, Roy keeps to the safety of his vegetative state while his dysfunctional family and an unrecognised girl pay visits. He is deep in an Africa of the mind, hunting the loathsome predator-scavenger, the marabou stork that preys upon pretty flamingos. In truth, he is hunting himself.

Of the company's excellent supporting cast of four Joanna Macleod is outstanding in the contrasting roles of brainless mother, goddess daughter and the hapless girl Roy drags down to his level of slaughter or being slaughtered.

JEREMY KINGSTON

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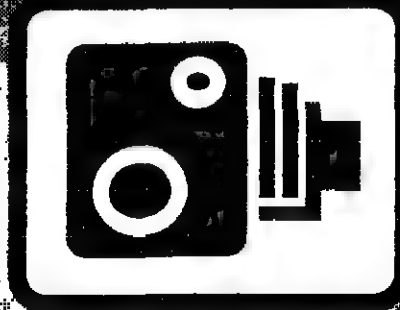
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Heidi Grant Murphy soprano
Thomas Quasthoff baritone
Mozart: Overture, Die Zauberflöte
Arias & duets from Il Re pastore, Don Giovanni and Die Zauberflöte
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AS PART OF HIS 60TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
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conducts **BEETHOVEN**
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Egmont Overture; Piano Concerto No 4 in G
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Midori violin Robert McDonald piano
Mozart: Sonata in G major, K379
Prokofiev: Five Melodies, Op 35
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Heidi Grant Murphy soprano
Thomas Quasthoff baritone
Mozart: Overture, Die Zauberflöte
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■ VISUAL ART

Turner's didactic Drawing Book, the *Liber Studiorum*, goes on show at the Tate Gallery



■ BASE NOTE

'Que sera sera', as the lady sang: now they are going to stage a musical about Doris Day

THE TIMES
ARTS



■ BASE NOTE

Sam Mendes announces top casting for his next shows at the Donmar Warehouse



■ BASE NOTE

Elaine Paige makes a belated Broadway debut playing Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard*

Isabel Carlisle on the print series with which Turner hoped to start a British school of landscape

Bold new tradition in prospect

For the past few years, the Clore Gallery at the Tate, which shows Turner's bequest to the nation of his oil paintings, watercolours, drawings and prints, has been unobtrusively putting on a series of small exhibitions curated by outside scholars. The first five were supported by research grants from Volkswagen, the two

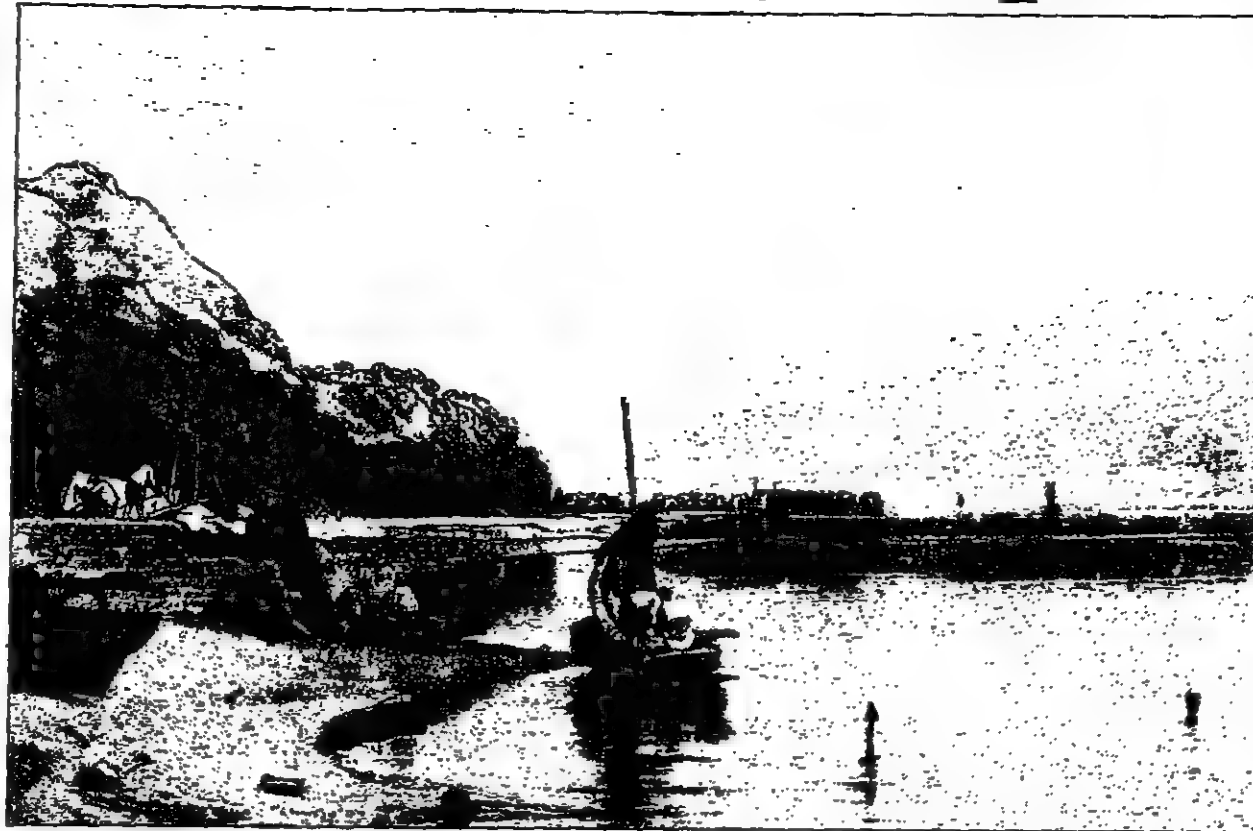
would, Turner hoped, form the basis of a new British school of landscape painting. Claude's own *Liber Veritatis*, drawings of landscapes translated into sepia prints almost two centuries before, was a major inspiration.

The exhibition shows the entire series of 71 prints of the *Liber* around the walls of the two galleries and, in show cases, deals with the techniques of production and examples of drawing and painting manuals produced by Turner's contemporaries.

In the staggered issues of sets of five prints, Turner mixed typically English country scenes such as *The Straw Yard or Ploughing*, *Eton with the Italianate Woman and Tambourine*, the awe-inspiring *St Gothard*, or the storm-lashed *Coast of Yorkshire*. Some derive from his own paintings, others are in the style of artists whom he admired, such as Gainsborough, but many are original compositions.

The oil painting of *Norham Castle* (1845-50) takes up a subject that Turner first tackled in the *Liber Studiorum* after visiting Norham, on the Tweed, in 1797. This is the only canvas in the exhibition, and the watery morning sunshine dissolving the mist off the river in a shimmer of blues and yellows is a reminder that without colour Turner's art is severely diminished.

The painting is shown alongside the series of mezzotints in which Turner can be seen working out his ideas on the subject: on one he scratched out part of the sky and added a wash directly onto the paper. In making the prints he selected and combined techniques according to



Object lesson: Turner's *Inverary Pier, Loch Fyne, Morning, 1811*, from his "Drawing Book", the *Liber Studiorum*

the analogous painting and drawing effects he wanted to convey. However, his fascination with light and atmosphere is not really present in these engraved studies that, in contrast to his paintings, have a relatively restricted range of tonal values. We need to bear in mind that the prints had a rather different, educational function, one that is filled by photography today.

Unfortunately, Turner was neither an efficient self-publicist nor an astute businessman and the series failed to sell well and to make the profits that he hoped for. In addition, although the *Liber* sold to artists such as David Cox and John Sell Cotman in Turner's lifetime, and Constable was advised in 1819 to "study Turner's

'Drawing Book' to learn to make a whole", it did not exert any significant influence on contemporary art. Nor did the *Liber* achieve its additional propaganda purpose: Turner was elected to the chair of Professor of Perspective at the Royal Academy in 1807 but secretly hoped to convert this to a Professorship of Landscape Painting — a dream that failed to materialise. In the age of the blockbuster exhibition it is easy to forget that an artist's near misses are as important for an understanding of the whole as the enduring triumphs.

Turner's "Drawing Book", the *Liber Studiorum*, sponsored by Volkswagen, is in the Clore Gallery at the Tate (0171-887 8000) until June 2, admission free.

BASE NOTES

IS THERE no end to the stream of musicals based on the lives of former stars? Apparently not: the latest luminary to have her exploits wheeled out for the nostalgia crowd is Doris Day. Some 40 of her songs are to be included in a new show at the King's Head, Islington, called *Definitely Doris* (opening April 10). So, one hopes, will be one of the great Hollywood quips — Groucho Marx's observation: "I knew Doris Day before she was a virgin."

WITH the help of a £570,250 lottery grant, Darlington is to get its controversial train. No, not an improvement to local transport links: this train — or rather, *Train* — is a sculpture made from 350,000 bricks by the naverick artist David Mach. When erected, next to a new supermarket development, *Train* will be 48 metres long and ten metres high and depict a steam train emerging from its own smoke, in celebration of Darlington's illustrious railway history.

QUICKLY swallowing his disappointment at losing out in the National Theatre race to Trevor Nunn, Sam Mendes has

announced bold casting for forthcoming Donmar Warehouse ventures. Jim Broadbent, last seen in Woody Allen's *Bullets over Broadway*, will take the lead in Mendes's new staging of Alan Bennett's *Hideous Krumpholtz* in June. Meanwhile, Anna Armstrong and Stephen Dillane will play the desolate Hamm and Clov in Katie Mitchell's revival of Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* next month.

WITH the new West End production of the show winning mostly favourable reviews, a remastered, one-CD version of *The Who's* original soundtrack to *Tommy* is now being promoted by Polydor. Meanwhile, a number of UK labels are said to be negotiating for the rights to a cast recording of the current London stage version.

MORE than 15 years after she was turned down for the title role in the New York production of *Evita*, the pint-sized British singer Elaine Paige will finally make her Broadway debut. On September 5 she takes over as Norma Desmond in Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Boulevard*.

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A master to make time stand still

Angelica Goodden evokes the understated art of Vermeer

It is incredible that Jan Vermeer, whom some consider the greatest of all painters, has had to wait until now for a major exhibition devoted exclusively to his work. Sold out even before it opened last week at the Mauritshuis in The Hague, the exhibition (which was already a sensation in Washington) is likely to make anyone lucky enough to see it feel both the attractions of escapism and the power of art to fix transient things in perpetuity.

Even more than other Dutch 17th-century artists, Vermeer epitomises a paradox. Nothing appears more settled than a Vermeer interior or still life, though what they record is impermanence — the fruits that will rot and the daily human activities that apparently lack eternal meaning. Vermeer reassures because he seems to take us outside time. His pictures, which radiate silence and a sense of space, are all the more moving for seeming to proclaim the virtues of changelessness. By being so unhurried, they work like a parable on the futility of haste and bustle.

Vermeer's appeal has not always been felt. He was a minor celebrity in his own age, but he died in poverty in 1675 and was largely forgotten for the next 150 years. Romanticism like to imagine him as laughing at this obscurity from beyond the grave, either because he believed that posterity would eventually do him justice or because he held worldly renown cheap. His day finally came in the mid 19th century, when he was rescued by critics and connoisseurs, and it has never passed. Our own age, which worries unconsciously about not preferring intangible values to worldly ones, admires him as much as more frankly materialistic ages have done.

We now know that Vermeer died a pauper not because he cared nothing for money, but because Louis XIV's invasion of The Netherlands had disastrous consequences for the Dutch economy. Yet the myth of the artist's detachment from the world is a very potent one. In Vermeer's case it has been compounded by his historical elusiveness. He seems inscrutable because so much of his life passed unrecorded. Proust called Vermeer, whose art he had revered since his youth, "unknown for all time".

In fact, Vermeer is now better known than ever. Since it was discovered that he was a picture-dealer as well as a painter, it has been hard to sustain the old image of an aloof, unworldly Vermeer. But that belief is bound to persist, for it enables us to feel cleansed and pure in his company.

Part of the blame for the Vermeer myth must be laid at the door of Marcel Proust. In *A la recherche du temps perdu*, the famous writer Bergotte goes to see Vermeer's *View of Delft* at an exhibition in Paris. He is so moved by the picture that he collapses and dies in front of it. The detail which occasions his death is Vermeer's painting of what he supposes is a section of wall (it

is actually a roof). This is a masterpiece of such understatement that it makes Bergotte despair about the routine nature of his own work. "That is how I should have written," he says. "My last books are too dry. I should have applied several layers of colour, made my sentences precious in themselves, like this little section of yellow wall." Where Vermeer crafted disinterestedly, he himself has written with an eye to the public — hence his art is corrupt.

If an artist cares as much about his work as Vermeer did, Proust is arguing, he is necessarily a superior artist. This is not a convincing argument, but Proust used it to underline the supreme merits of artistic detachment. The case of Vermeer, misinterpreted or not, leads him to conclude that great art rests on hidden laws of sacrifice. Nothing but an obscure sense of duty makes an artist repaint a detail over and over again, even though the true worth of his devotion will be appreciated only when he is dead. The perfection of Vermeer's wall shows the proper autonomy of art. Art is worth being dead to the world, for as Proust sought to do, and as legend likes to see Vermeer doing. The vernal artist, on the other hand, concedes everything to the world and its values. The secondariness of much vernal art, incidentally, is now on display at the Royal Academy's Leighton exhibition.

The *View of Delft* seems to Proust the ultimate work of art, in the strict sense of being outside time. The painting may have shown Delft at a particular point in its history (though it is no photograph), but it also "froze" the image as an ideal representation. Perhaps because it seems to transcend the inherent instability of real life, Proust's own great novel about time shares the same quality of timelessness, despite its preoccupation with the mundane detail of high society. Likewise, Vermeer's women, absorbed in dreams, his quiet streets or townscapes, seem poetic as well as ordinary. They embody a truth that stands above truth-to-life. This is why they are uplifting as well as reassuring.

So the question of how close we ourselves stand to the subject of art becomes secondary. We do not necessarily need to identify an image as showing how something "really" was. We may be most moved by the way Vermeer makes simplicity appear preferable to sophistication. Possibly we love Vermeer because he exalts the virtues of calm ordinariness and discretion in a peculiarly beguiling way. Or we may admire the non-referential aspects of his work, such as his breathtaking use of colour, more than anything.

Either way, Vermeer manages to sharpen and enhance our own vision, as Proust thought the "binoculars of art" should always do.

The author is a Fellow of St Hilda's College, Oxford.



Blake: no royalties

was offered the chance to attend the hearing but politely refused. Since its publication by Jonathan Cape in 1991, all moneys made from the book have been frozen in an application by the Attorney-General, Sir Nicholas Lyell. Blake, 73, received a £35,000 advance for the book he wrote in Moscow. At the High Court's Chancery Division, the Government will argue that the traitor has no right to the royalties, since the book was produced in breach of confidentiality. Lord Lester of Fierne Hill has been appointed *amicus curiae* to ensure Blake gets a fair hearing.

No Other Choice deals with Blake's time as a middle-ranking officer within MI6, his arrest, conviction and 42-year sentence in 1961, his escape from Wormwood Scrubs and his life in Russia. Benedict Birnberg, the solicitor who represented the traitor until legal aid was refused, said Blake was hard-up and living on a pension from the institute where he worked in the Soviet Union.

They indulge in unusual business practices in Iceland. A shop in

Mary Ann Sieghart is unshocked by a notorious film about teenage sex, drugs and disease

Why I would let my children see *Kids*

minutes of the film in conversations of unflinching veracity. *Kids* captures brilliantly the desperate urges that boys of that age experience, and the consequent pressures that they put on girls to submit.

The moral to any teenage girl is clear: boys will promise anything to get what they want, and it is best not to believe them. For the effect on one girl, Jenny, of believing Telly's insincere protestations of love when he takes away her virginity, is that she catches the HIV virus. Because we learn this early on, we view the film through a different prism. *Kids* becomes a powerful contraceptive. And if it does not deter teenagers from sex altogether, it will at least encourage them to use condoms.

So why do so many adults find the film intolerable? The most serious charge is that of paedophilia. This does not wash: though all the actors

are over 16, Telly himself barely looks old enough to have reached the age of consent. He is no dirty old man taking advantage of a prepubescent girl: these are two adolescents making the same silly mistakes that teenagers make all over the world.

That is probably one reason why some adults cannot bear the film. It embarrasses them. Men in the audience will be uncomfortably reminded of how sex-obsessed they too were at 16. Women may remember the dreadful dilemmas they faced at that age: simultaneously desperate to resist and to give into the pressure inflicted by boys. Meanwhile, those of an older generation may be secretly jealous that today's teenagers have a chance to indulge in what had to remain a fantasy when they were adolescents.

But *Kids* glamorises neither sex nor drugs. The sex scenes are

decidedly perfunctory and unerotic, shabby even. Any teenager with an ounce of sense — and most have more than that — would see how empty these lives are. The many drug scenes purvey no excitement: cannabis may be entertaining to smoke, but to see stoned people on a screen is as tedious as watching paint dry.

Unlike most teen films, the girls do not look like Sharon Stone and the boys are no Matt Dillons. Although the girls are quite sympathetic, none of the boys is attractive or funny or likeable. Because the characters are not beautiful and because they have not been given clever lines, the audience is never sucked into hero worship. Indeed Telly, the leading boy, is not just physically repellent, he even kicks his own cat and steals money from his mother. Not only is he clearly no hero: he is too obnoxious even to be an anti-hero.

Kids is ultimately a sad film. The teenagers depicted are no more than grown-up children using their bodies as toys. Puberty still has a novelty value for them, and sex is the most fun they can have without spending money. But they are struggling to grasp the rules of the game, to understand that, in sexual relationships, for every ladder there is the risk of a snake.

This is a learning process that almost everybody goes through when they first become sexually active. The age at which it happens will vary, and these New York kids with absent parents are likely to be the most precocious of all. To that extent they are untypical. But to deny that teenagers' private lives revolve around thoughts of sex and that they are tempted to take drugs for fun would be both unrealistic and ultimately damaging.

The British Board of Film Censors was right to pass this film and right to give it an 18 certificate, since in practice that means that children of 15, 16 and 17 will find their way in. Parents and teachers should encourage teenagers to go and discuss it afterwards. *Kids*, for all its emptiness, tells both adults and adolescents more about real life than any number of saccharine Hollywood concoctions.

Heads or tails, Big Brother wins

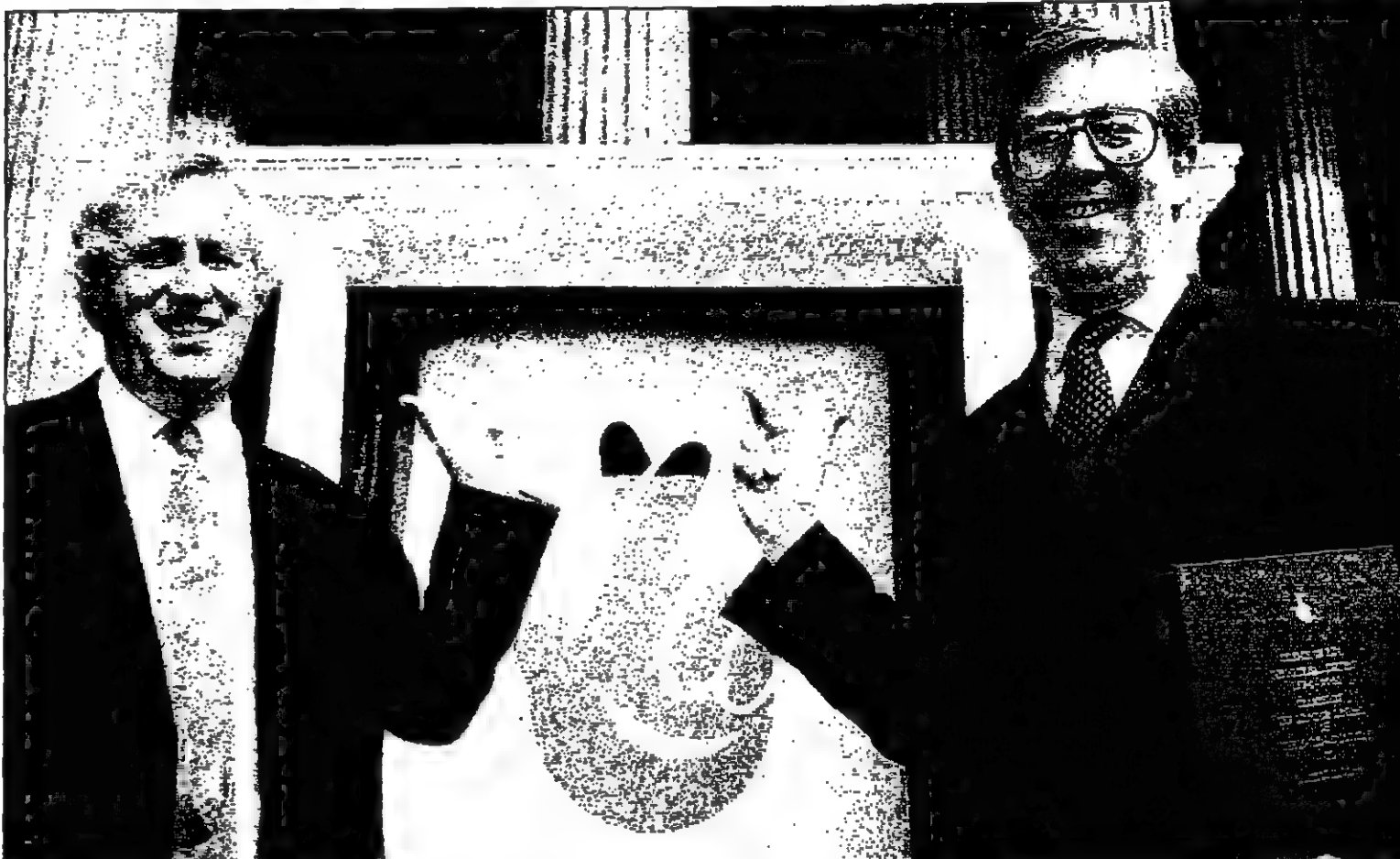
Now that Camelot cannot lose, the lottery is just a form of taxation

What a week this has been for capitalism. In London yesterday, investors in Lloyd's faced the gods of the market and wept. Thousands are now ruined. Yet across town, investors in Camelot were being tucked deeper in their feather bed by that friendly regulator, Peter Davis of Oflot. He agreed to cover them against a risk so small that Lloyd's would not have thought it worth a premium. Where, rose the cry over Lime Street, is justice?

The answer is known to every shrewd businessman throughout history. If you want to be certain of your money, cut a deal with government. The risk is negligible, politicians are gullible and the taxpayers' money is limitless. Britain's National Lottery will this year overtake Japan's as the biggest in the world, with £8 billion in turnover and £4 billion in prizes. Anyone who thinks that money would be ever be allowed to run loose without a Treasury chaplain is a fool. The message of Thursday's bizarre decision on the "match-three" winners is proof of this. The National Lottery is not a game. It is a tax farm.

Mr Davis's decision was really trivial. Camelot has made great play of its minimum prize of £10, paid out to anyone who gets three correct numbers at the weekly draw. Roughly a million people a week win this prize, sustaining enthusiasm among those who rightly consider their chance of a jackpot as low. Camelot has noted that people tend to bet more highly on numbers under 31 (that is, on their family birthdates). Should too many gamblers hit the right three numbers under 31, Camelot might have to pay out more than it has allocated in that week's prize fund. This might jeopardise the bigger prizes needed for marketing purposes. It might jeopardise the £100 million prize reserve. It might even lead to what Oflot's Mr Davis this week called "the nightmare scenario": a threat to the finances of Camelot itself. As a result, Camelot may now pay less than £10 on three winning numbers if it chooses.

This is most odd. The finances of Camelot make Fort Knox look like a piggy bank. Mr Davis admitted that the risk he was closing was small. His office said it was less than one in 14 million. An Oxford statistician said it would not occur "in the lifetime of the universe". Warning to this theme, Mr Davis told BBC Radio



Is the relationship between lottery operator and regulator too cosy? Chief executive of Camelot Tim Holley and head of Oflot Peter Davis

that he was more likely to bump into Elvis Presley on the moon. His visits to America may have told him things about Mr Presley concealed from the rest of us, but to lottery players the decision was a mystery. If the risk was so comically small, why break gambling's most sacred tenets: that rules are not changed during the game and that when the bank loses, the bank pays? To make a change against the small player to protect about-to-be-rich jackpot winners and already-rich Camelot shareholders was extraordinary.

When Camelot was awarded the contract in preference to Richard Branson's non-profit offer, much was said by the then Secretary of State, Peter Brooke, of the virtues of private sector risks and rewards. Had the lottery not started on time, Camelot would have been "fined" £1 million a day. Yet this was at worst a short-term risk against certain huge profits. The Treasury, not Camelot, ensured the success of the lottery by legislating for a monopoly and banning all competition. It even banned a practice common in other countries, of private side bets on the outcome — to the fury of the pools companies, who have already lost a third of their business. The Government also allowed consortium members to be exclusive sub-contractors.

Bigger even than the £320 million profit that ICL, Racal and De La Rue will probably collect over the seven-year contract are the profits they will derive as non-competitive equipment suppliers.

This week's decision confirms what those acquainted with state lotteries knew from the start. The only risk in bidding for a contract is the risk of not winning it. State lotteries have to succeed because governments get too much kudos and revenue from them to "risk a risk". A lottery company is as secure as a branch of the Inland Revenue. Lottery contracts are like arms contracts. They are a caution, cost-plus-profit means of becoming very rich at the taxpayers' or punters' expense.

Camelot/Oflot's renegeing on the match-three pledge is a storm in a teacup. I doubt if the number of players will plummet next week and the chance of the change being invoked is almost non-existent. What is more instructive is that Oflot decided that even an infinitesimal risk to the lottery had to be eliminated. Given the choice of cash-limiting

the prize money or risking viability, Mr Davis cash-limited the prize.

Mr Davis is now involved in restructuring a large portion of the gaming industry in Britain, and in such a way as to give its producers all the protection of a public corporation. If a rule appears to put the producer at risk from the claims of consumers, statute law is invoked to close that risk. Mr Davis is treating Camelot as if it were a surrogate for the taxpayer, as it were in partnership with the Treasury.

The Government now has a huge stake in the lottery. Its success is altering the balance of leisure spending in Britain by individuals, charities, benefactors, the arts, sports and government. Government already takes a direct 12 per cent out of the lottery takings. This is unusually small. Most state lotteries give far more than that to government. Under the 1993 Act, the Treasury was generous in allowing a further 25 per cent to go beyond its immediate grasp to the "good cause" distributors (in one of which, the Millennium Commission, I declare an interest).

Three years ago the Treasury promised that this 25 per cent was sacrosanct. In the Commons on January 25, 1993, it pledged that its spending on arts or other charities would not be cut to match the extra coming in from the lottery. Ever since, the Treasury has struggled to circumvent that pledge. This year the temptation was too much and arts spending took the first axe. Now the Treasury is eager to shift lottery grants to current as well as capital spending, which will ease the path to further cuts in direct subsidies. Next it will probably press for lottery money to go to schools and hospitals. In other words, the lottery is on its way to becoming just one more source of general taxation.

Lotteries have provided a peculiarly acceptable form of tax, which is why banana republics love them. In Britain's case, the mild thrill of the lottery draw will incur what amounts to a luxury rate of tax of 37 per cent. But this tax is voluntary and, for many, it is clearly enjoyable. Lotteries are the way of the world. But we should stop pretending that they have anything to do with risk, capitalism or privatisation. Britain's state-regulated, state-protected, state-benefiting monopoly is John Major's dearest nationalised industry. The only risk is borne by the players.

Simon Jenkins

Literary agent

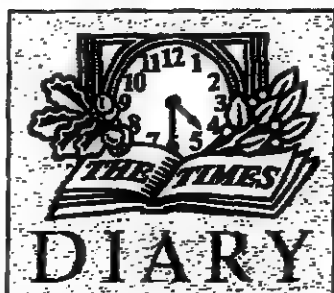
THE GOVERNMENT has been trying to lure the Soviet spy George Blake back to Britain for a court case on April Fool's Day. The case has been prepared by civil servants in an attempt to secure the £90,000 amassed as a result of royalties from Blake's book *No Other Choice*.

Blake, who was responsible for the death of a number of British agents and now lives in Moscow,

was offered the chance to attend the hearing but politely refused. Since its publication by Jonathan Cape in 1991, all moneys made from the book have been frozen in an application by the Attorney-General, Sir Nicholas Lyell. Blake, 73, received a £35,000 advance for the book he wrote in Moscow. At the High Court's Chancery Division, the Government will argue that the traitor has no right to the royalties, since the book was produced in breach of confidentiality. Lord Lester of Fierne Hill has been appointed *amicus curiae* to ensure Blake gets a fair hearing.

No Other Choice deals with Blake's time as a middle-ranking officer within MI6, his arrest, conviction and 42-year sentence in 1961, his escape from Wormwood Scrubs and his life in Russia. Benedict Birnberg, the solicitor who represented the traitor until legal aid was refused, said Blake was hard-up and living on a pension from the institute where he worked in the Soviet Union.

They indulge in unusual business practices in Iceland. A shop in



Reykjavik advertised free mobile phones to anybody who turned up unclothed on a specific day. Twenty naked applicants, all male, duly showed — to be told that only ten phones were on offer. The nude clientele protested so vigorously that another ten phones were found immediately.

Bogged down

I TRUST that this weekend will prove rather more restful for Lord Nolan than a recent Saturday he spent with the BBC. A radio car was dispatched to his Kent home early in the morning, so that he could take part in a live debate with Lord Donaldson of Lynton, former Master of the Rolls, on the behaviour of parliamentarians.

Transmission proved impossible from the noble lord's home, which sits in a hollow, so the BBC drove Nolan in its van into the countryside to find a suitable spot. Minutes before they were due on air, they still hadn't found one, so in desperation the driver pulled on to the verge — and got stuck.

The interview went ahead. Afterwards, Nolan hopped out to help to push the van, which promptly sunk to its axles. He was eventually rescued from the scene by his wife.

No Moore

THE SIREN-LIKE antics of Demi Moore have signally failed to impress President Clinton at the White House. The sultry star of *Disclosure* and *Indecent Proposal* has been asking for help from the American Government for her latest film, *Gl Jane*.

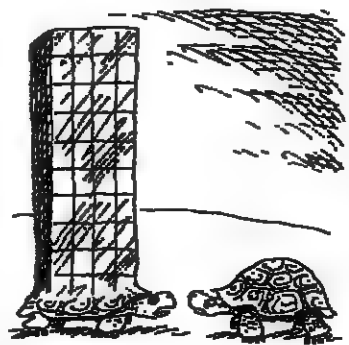
Makers of the film, an action thriller involving an elite US Navy corps akin to the SAS, asked for information from the Pentagon to ensure authenticity — but to no avail. In desperation, Moore called the White House herself and demanded attention. She met with a swift refusal on a number of occasions, however. She is, after all, married to Bruce Willis, a staunch Republi-

can and long-time critic of President Clinton.

Broken art

DAMIEN HIRST, the pickled sheep of British art, is discovering that his works are not very long-lived. His deconstructed "op-art" paintings are falling to bits.

Hirst recently presented to the Colony Room Club in Soho a painting of coloured dots on canvas, enti-



itled *Aprotinin*. Two of the discs have dropped off. The artist was unmoved by the news — he simply signed the blobs and stuck them back on, claiming the value of the painting had been increased immeasurably.

Two of the discs have dropped off. The artist was unmoved by the news — he simply signed the blobs and stuck them back on, claiming the value of the painting had been increased immeasurably.

Balmorality

THE ROYAL Family's current predicament has given new life to that old chestnut of the relationship between Queen Victoria and her ghillie at Balmoral, John Brown. The BBC is making a documentary about their relationship (Billy Connolly is tipped to play Brown), and a book being hawked around publishers suggests not only that they married secretly but that she also bore a child.

The author, Dr Michelle MacDonald, who has been researching the subject for 25 years, insists the relationship deserves fresh examination in the light of recent events within the Royal Family. "There is a whole matrix of evidence which is very compelling to suppose that Victoria did marry Brown and had his child," he says, claiming that a lady-in-waiting witnessed Brown emerging from the Queen's bedroom in the early hours and that a minister made a deathbed confes-



Brown: royal ties

sion that he officiated at the secret marriage ceremony. Needless to say, the Countess of Longford, recognised as Victoria's definitive biographer, insists that Victoria would never have contemplated a sexual relationship with a subject, let alone a domestic servant.

P.H.S



NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD

The economy is healthy, but people do not believe it

Not since May 1966 has the interest rate charged on mortgages been lower than the 7.24 per cent announced yesterday by Britain's biggest lenders. For anyone shrewd or lucky enough to borrow money from Bradford & Bingley's Direct telephone-lending subsidiary, the new rate of 6 per cent to be announced next week will be the lowest generally available in this country since May 1960, when Harold Macmillan was Prime Minister. And mortgages in those days could be obtained only after finding a large deposit, saving loyally for years with a building society, often for derisory returns, and impressing its manager of one's moral worth. It can confidently be said that homeowners have never had it so good.

Why then do the country's homeowners, who also comprise a clear majority of voters, remain so resolutely sullen in the face of the Government's and the mortgage lenders' attempts to stuff their pockets with cash? One answer can be immediately dismissed. It is often argued that low interest rates are politically unhelpful and bad for consumer confidence because they reduce the incomes of savers. Such complaints disregard the benefits of rising stock and bond prices to many savers. Worse, they ignore the way that inflation and taxes used to eat away at their capital in the period which many unsophisticated small savers still think of as the glory days of 15 per cent interest rates. In fact, with today's low inflation and the many tax shelters created for savers in the past five years, the Government could claim convincingly that savers, as well as borrowers, "have never had it so good".

Why then is such optimism met with derision? The main reason is the sense of insecurity which Tony Blair has made Labour's political leitmotif. Many homeowners have lost their jobs, fallen into debt or had their equity wiped out by the slump in the housing market. For them even the present low interest rates seem painfully high. Worse still, many of the people worst affected by the housing slump are locked

into usurious mortgage arrangements which prevent them from benefiting from the welcome outbreak of competition in the mortgage market. Even those homeowners and savers who are better off are workers for most of their waking hours — and in that capacity they feel more worried about the future than Britons have for 50 years.

There is not much the Government can do about this insecurity without compromising its free-market principles and endangering the foundations of the economic recovery. There is, however, hope on the horizon. As long as the recovery continues, unemployment will go on falling. With lower unemployment will come greater confidence, gradually rising house prices and opportunities for people with negative equity gradually to repay their debts.

But will the recovery continue? This constantly-asked question encapsulates the second reason for the public's sullen mood. People do not believe that the present economic upswing is as soundly based as it actually seems to be. Part of the explanation goes back to the debacle of Black Wednesday. The Government's own propaganda during the ERM period has continued to haunt it. John Major worked so hard to convince the public that a floating pound and a monetary policy independent of Germany's would lead to disaster that people still find it difficult to believe that these very policies are now providing a sound foundation for steady non-inflationary growth. Indeed, the Chancellor himself seemed to succumb to such doubts this week when he implied that Britain's monetary policy would probably be less successful if it remained independent than if it joined a European monetary union.

Yet Margaret Thatcher's labour market reforms, combined with Mr Major's enforced conversion to monetary independence, really have made Britain's economy stronger than for decades. The question is whether the public — or ministers themselves — can be persuaded to believe this.

BEYOND THE BOUNDARY

More than cricket is at stake today in the Indian sub-continent

India and Pakistan — the "midnight's children" of cricket — have fought almost as many wars with each other as they have played Test matches. If India has had the edge on the battlefield, Pakistan is at date ahead on the cricket pitch. Today, in the southern city of Bangalore, the two countries face each other in the quarter-finals of the cricket World Cup: the match, the first on Indian soil between the two sides in nearly a decade, promises to be part cricket and part war. Old W. G. Grace, were he somehow to return, would not recognise the atmosphere; Prince Ranjitsinhji might, perhaps, but only with some local prompting.

Yet the true attractions of this game — apart from the frills of atavistic bitterness and antipathy in the stands — lie in the quality of cricket which the contest promises to provide. Both teams are crowded with cricketers of extravagant panache, although the Pakistanis must be accounted narrow favourites. Wasim Akram, their captain, is the most compelling cricketer in the world: with pace bowler Waqar Younis and leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed, he leads an incisive attack. India's strength, by contrast, lies more in one man, the Bradmanesque Bombay batsman Sachin Tendulkar.

It is a wonder, however, that both sides are facing each other in India at all. Pakistan and India no longer play cricket except on neutral territory, with the sub-continent's cricketers paying a sporting price for the diplomatic tensions which today bedevil relations between Islamabad and Delhi. Ever since the Kashmir dispute took a violent turn, religious extremists in both

countries have vied with each in an ugly contest of jingoism. The Indian extremists are ahead, so far, on points: the Shiv Sena party, Hindu fundamentalists with a scant understanding of the place of cricket in India's civilisation, forced in 1991 the cancellation of Pakistan's last planned tour. The party's hotheads, drunk on anti-Muslim sentiment, forced their way into Bombay's Wankhede stadium, dug up the pitch and doused the square with petrol. Hours later, Pakistan called off its tour.

Today's match, however, will be as heavily policed as would a visit to Bangalore by the Queen. There will be more police present at the ground than there could ever be run scored, even with Tendulkar at his brimming best: that is as it should be, for a violent incident will have impressive diplomatic repercussions. But if the match passes off as the cricketers themselves would like it to — with the scoring of runs, the taking of wickets and the grasping of steep catches taking precedence over the memories of past battles fought — the gains to both countries would be incalculable.

If the two countries have not fought a war with each other for a quarter of a century, they have not played much cricket either. The latter is cause for profound regret. There is much that India and Pakistan share — history, language, food and culture — but there can be no bond between them more compelling than that of cricket. Let them play cricket today, and play again more often. If they can address each other with bat and ball, they will soon address each other, more constructively, beyond the boundary.

THE PIGEON PIEMAN COMETH

Survival of the fattest: pigeons were made to be plucked

Pigeons make up the chorus-line of the urban landscape. From Trafalgar Square to the Piazza San Marco, whether perched messily on the heads of statues of worthies, or swooping up in flocks for no apparent reason, they are support players in the grand architectural ensemble. So this mysterious pigeon-napper of Trafalgar Square is attacking a sentimental urban archetype.

Scotland Yard calculates that he has already removed 4,000 pigeons in his big box, and that if he is not stopped, all the pigeons will be gone from Trafalgar Square within seven months. That underestimates the capacity of those shabby grey unemployables to fill a vacuum. It also misunderstands the place of the pigeon in the food chain. For pigeons to be fed on tourist-trap grain and Soho black bags, and then to be recycled through the same Soho restaurants might seem a virtuous cycle. But urban pigeons can be unhealthy immigrants, and infect their eater with diarrhoea or even terminal belly-ache. Demand from restaurants for suspiciously cheap pigeons is not likely to last.

Pigeon was once a staple of the national menu. Even middling medieval establishments kept doves for the kitchen, as they had stew for their fish. Pigeon was dish of the day for Louis XIV, especially served with peas. That prototypical French gourmet La Varenne gives a recipe for pigeons and green-pea stew in which the birds are poached in stock and then garnished with lettuce, peas and bacon. Mrs Beeton

recommends a formula for cold pigeon pie, seasoned and stuffed with foie gras and quartered truffles, and padded out with plover's eggs and some good forcemeat.

But for some, it seems, the plain recipe is simple. First take the Northern Line to Trafalgar Square. Then catch your pigeon, without difficulty. Why otherwise is a pigeon medieval thieves' cant for a gullible dupe who can be easily trapped by a rook or wide-boy? Try to make sure it is a clean wood pigeon recently flown to town, not a Cockney squab. Then pluck it. The feathers come off more easily than a goose's, and thrifty countrymen saved fingernails by simply cutting off pigeons' breasts and skinning them. Then cook your pigeon with peas, bacon, onion, sweetbreads and pastry.

Supermarkets and packaged food have alienated the public from the fundamentals of carnivorous eating. Our phantom pigeon-fancier of Trafalgar Square deserves an OBE for bringing us back to basics. When Jean Knowlson, "the pigeon lady of Purley", has been banged up in Holloway twice this year for feeding pigeons, it is paradoxical to pursue the pigeon man. But it would be safer for bird's nest quack in Chinatown, as well as ecologically correct, if he could now turn his attention to Canada geese which are destroying the parks, and grey squirrels — delicious barbecued with roots. Blow sentimentality. Tom Lehrer's song *Poisoning Pigeons in the Park* was not in bad taste, apart, just, from the poison.

Long-term look at a single currency

From Mr Michael Fabricant, MP for Staffordshire Mid (Conservative)

Sir, With the publication of the Government's White Paper on the European Union imminent before the latest round of inter-governmental conferences, it is opportune to consider with whom and where Britain's long-term future might lie.

While the British Government and some of those few other EU countries which are net financial contributors to the Union are keen to devote powers away from Brussels, the majority of member States are net beneficiaries and are deeply federalist.

Lifelong partners should be compatible whether in marriage, business, or political union. Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, is wise to explore and strengthen relationships across the Atlantic.

In the not too distant future the United States may well decide that it needs compatible partners who share a common culture and legal system. Strains are already developing in the North American Free Trade Area relationship. The election of John Howard as Prime Minister of Australia (report and leading article, March 4) may expose difficulties in that country's relationship with South-East Asia.

"Maastricht mark 2" must not limit Britain's future options through the surrender of our gold and foreign currency reserves to a European central bank and a single currency.

If our relationship with Europe prospers, all will be well. If it does not, and as Britain cannot prosper in isolation, there will come a time when we may wish to seek other more global partners with whom "we can do business".

In the next century we may need the independence of our own currency to forge our own destiny.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL FABRICANT,
House of Commons,
March 8.

From Mr Bill Cash, MP for Stafford (Conservative)

Sir, Anatole Kalesky ("Is the euro beyond our ken?", March 5), in a clear reference to my call for Kenneth Clarke to consider his position on the issue of a single currency, argues that it would be preferable for those such as myself to take up the Chancellor's call for a national debate.

Your readers may have noticed that this is what I have been seeking for the past six years and more, not least in the Maastricht debates (when I put down over 200 amendments in my own name), in your own columns and elsewhere, in pamphlets published by the European Foundation and in its *European Journal*.

In truth we have had a national debate. The problem is that sympathisers of Kenneth Clarke have not taken the blindest notice, despite proof that the ERM did not work, leading to massive unemployment, loss of businesses and homes, a gargantuan PSBR, higher taxation to debate it and accompanied by broken promises. To the discomfort of the Euro-fanatics, as the truth has dawned, there has been a deep shift in electoral opinion on a single currency throughout the whole of Europe.

Our economy has improved (since September 16, 1992) but only despite the European policies of those committed to the ERM and monetary union after these had failed. They are simply not prepared to recognise that they were wrong and they cling to the wreckage of the Maastricht treaty. This needs fundamental renegotiation in the inter-governmental conference in British and European interests. It is hurting but it is not working.

Failing to repudiate the single currency and fixed exchange rates simply lets Labour off the hook. Blair and Brown could not deliver their promises for health, education and jobs and at the same time obey the requirements of monetary union.

I am all for a further genuine national debate (and Europe-wide) but, in the absence of a referendum, which the Chancellor resists, how would the result be judged? The issues are already clear. What we need now is a decision — in next Tuesday's White Paper on Europe.

Yours faithfully,
BILL CASH
(Chairman),
The European Foundation,
61 Pall Mall, SW1,
March 8.

Manners at 160mph

From Mr J. Whittle

Sir, Your Car 96 section (March 2) discusses in laudatory and enthusiastic terms the production and sale of a Jaguar car capable of 160mph, describing it as "female-friendly". Selfish, insensitive, antisocial, yob-friendly would be a better description.

Another of your adjectives is "aggressive". Nobody needs an aggressive car. No civilised person would want one. Why are they made? Why does the law permit them to be used on our roads?

By the way, the interviewee in your "Steering Column" appears to express remorse at breaking the law while driving. Is this a record?

Yours faithfully,
J. WHITTLE,
185 Garstang Road,
Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire.

Democratic deliberation on future of British monarchy

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XX Telephone 0171-782 5000

From Dr Allan Jackson

Sir, I am personally ambivalent about the desirability of royalty as an institution (letters, March 4, 5). But there is no doubt that the Prince of Wales will, on his accession, be the most capable, best-informed and best-educated monarch of this country since Queen Elizabeth I.

Here is a man who has been educated in Britain and Australia; holds an honours degree; writes; rides; plays polo; has parachuted; flies aircraft; and has captained a ship. He is committed to good husbandry, environmental care, and the built environment. More importantly, he has established The Prince's Youth Business Trust which, by the start of this year, had helped over 20,000 young people (especially disabled persons, members of minority communities, and ex-offenders) launch over 22,000 businesses.

Compared with the appalling mediocrity of most of his royal forebears and of many of his political, ecclesiastical and establishment contemporaries, Prince Charles stands out as a beacon of some hope for this country's future. His private life is immaterial.

Yours sincerely,
ALLAN JACKSON,
14 Latimer Lane,
Guisborough, Cleveland.

From Mr Malcolm Winram

Sir, Politicians debating the future of our monarchy resemble a poachers' convention deliberating on the future

role of the gamekeeper. If we do not wish to face the future election of the legal and military guardians of this nation, at party whim, then politicians should not be permitted such a disproportionate voice in the future of the British monarchy.

Royal individuals may have their imperfections but these should not be used to bring into existence the question of the monarchy, particularly by the group from whose political excesses it protects us. We have given politicians no such mandate and if they wish to play a role in this matter let them do so democratically by first seeking the electorate's will.

Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM WINRAM,
37 Rothsay Road, Bedford,
March 7.

From Mr Brian Hobley

Sir, The call for a debate in Parliament on the role of monarchy (report, March 4) is to be applauded.

The scale of publicity now being given to the actions and behaviour of certain members of the Royal Family, especially the Princess of Wales and the Duchess of York, has revealed an indulgent lifestyle that is totally inappropriate at a time when millions have to see the quality of their lives worsen.

This raises the question of the true full cost of the monarchy to the taxpayer, including a range of subsidies and services apart from the Civil List payments. These subsidies cover such things as patronage, security, main-

tenance of royal palaces and apartments, "grace and favour" accommodation, and what some might consider excessive pageantry, pomp, and ceremonial.

Yours,
BRIAN HOBLEY,
4 Village Farm Court,
Weston-on-the-Green, Oxford.

From Mrs Jennifer Miller

Sir, Our Queen is probably the best-known public figure in the world. She has devoted her life to the service of our country and Commonwealth. Who could equal her probity and self-sacrifice? She never has a day's respite from state business, and last year fulfilled 650 official engagements at home and overseas, while the Prince of Wales carried out nearly as many, including his brave and historic visit to the Republic of Ireland.

Altogether the Royal Family carried out a total of over 4,000 such engagements last year. Meanwhile the Treasury took a profit of £85 million from the Crown Estates, while the Civil List given in exchange for this remains fixed at £7.9 million, and in any case only pays allowances to the Queen, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and Prince Philip.

This country should realise before it is too late how much we are indebted to our monarchy, both figuratively and literally.

Yours faithfully,
JENNIFER MILLER,
2 Heathview Gardens, Putney, SW15.

The spoils of war

From Dr John Drewe

Sir, I note with dismay that a spokesman for the Union Bank of Switzerland has dismissed as "a fairy-tale" claims that there are substantial assets from Holocaust victims in dormant Swiss accounts (report, February 24; see also report, February 8, and letter, February 14).

Five years ago, in Moscow, I examined German files taken from Berlin by the Soviets in 1945-46, including records of two of the agencies involved in the systematic theft of art treasures by the Nazis between 1935 and 1944. It is clear that some of those treasures fell into the hands of the Allies in 1945 and that by 1948 over two million items had been returned to 13 European countries.

Between 1949 and 1951 the collection and storage of the remaining items was organised under the auspices of the Ministers-President of Länder. However, in 1952, the Federal German Government assumed this responsibility, and in 1953 the onus for returning stored items to the original owners was transferred to the Government by the Allies.

As a result of my investigations, I have no doubt that a significant number of the paintings, archives, books and treasures stolen from the occu-

pled territories and placed in the central repositories in Munich, Wiesbaden, Marburg and Offenbach in 1946, are still being kept in hidden stores in Germany. Yet any action on the return of the smaller of these collections is virtually embargoed.

Although Article 15 of the Cultural Treaty (1992) between Russia and Germany specifies the contractual arrangement for the mutual return of cultural treasures, the emphasis of that treaty is necessarily on major state collections.

During the last 50 years there has been no concerted attempt by the German authorities methodically to examine the existing records, in order to identify and return the remaining stolen items.

Two years ago a number of important paintings from pre-war private collections, stored in East Germany since the war, were returned to France (report, June 28, 1994) and the valuable stamp collection of the Latvian Post Office, held in Berlin since 1942, was returned to Riga in June 1995.

The artefacts and gold jewellery excavated by Heinrich Schliemann from Hisarlik, Mycenae and Troy, and given by him to the Berlin municipality, were captured by the Soviets in 1946 and are now in St Petersburg. The German Government has consistently claimed that they should be returned to Berlin under the 1992 treaty,

while the Russians have asked Germany for the return of some 40,000 items, including the Amber Room taken by the Wehrmacht from Tsarskoe Selo in 1941-42.

However, there is unequivocal evidence that the Amber Room is no longer intact and that the pieces were separated and auctioned in Berlin during the latter stages of the war. An official admission of this fact by the Germans would certainly not improve the chance of reaching an agreement on the return of other items, including the Schliemann collection.

The value of treasures confiscated by the Nazis from Hungarian Jews alone greatly exceeds the £21 million from Holocaust victims which the Swiss Bankers' Association claims to be lying in dormant Swiss accounts — an inconceivably low estimate in view of the information now becoming available from the German files stored in Poland and Russia.

These files can be cross-referenced with prewar catalogues and some of the original owners can thus be identified. There is surely an obligation on the German Government to do so.

Yours faithfully,
J. DREWE,
Greenmantle,
Washington Close,
Reigate, Surrey,
March 7.

Hymns today

From Canon Michael Saward

Sir, Readers of Mr Andy Lund's letter of March 5 might believe that I had accused Graham Kendrick, the Christian songwriter, of writing "happy-clappy choruses devoid of meaning". I did not say that. Graham Kendrick's songs are full of Christian doctrine, which can hardly be said of many modern religious songs and choruses.

Mr Lund, however, unwittingly reinforces my main point. Kendrick's *We Believe*, he argues, "contains the complete Creed". Not so. That hymn, good as it is, confuses the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, omits all references to the key incarnational doctrines,

to the nature of the Church, baptism, the communion of saints, forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and eternal life, and goes on to add a non-creedal gloss on the work of the Holy Spirit plus an extra passage from the Letter to the Philippians.

A good hymn, but certainly not "the complete Creed". A great many of those who sing it presumably think it is the Creed and many of them may well belong to churches which never use the Creeds in their worship. I repeat my main point: churches relying on a diet of "songs and choruses" are at high risk of creating theological ignorance.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL SAWARD,
6 Amen Court, EC4.

Hostages and arms

From Mr L. J. McLoughlin

Sir, Lord Howe (letter, March 6) mistakes the relative importance of the fatwa, as against Iran/Iraq arms supplies, in determining Iran's attitude and therefore the fate of the British hostages (letter, March 2).

The Iranians had ample evidence that Iraq was receiving more favourable treatment in terms of arms supplies from Britain following the ceasefire.

Many Conservatives have concentrated so much on sophisticated argu-

ments over modifications of guidelines that they have ignored the facts of how matters were perceived on the ground. The Iranians could, through their friends and agents here and in the Middle East, see for themselves the evidence of increased arms supplies to their most bitter enemy.

Yours sincerely,
L. J. McLOUGHLIN
(Director),
London Centre for Arab Studies
(Publishers),
Vicarage House,
58-60 Kensington Church Street, W8,
March 8.

Asthma research

From Mr Bob Clough-Parker

Sir, Your report today on the research published this week in the *British Medical Journal* on a 1994 thunderstorm that led to London hospitals being overwhelmed by requests for treatment from asthma sufferers, I do hope that this will once and for all put paid to well intentioned but uninformative sympathisers who tell asthmatics that "you must feel better now that it's rained".

Yours faithfully,
BOB CLOUGH-PARKER,
The Bond, Godstal Lane, Chester,
March 8.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Martin Bell

From Mr Stephen Fisher

Sir, Now that Martin Bell has decided to "hang up his flak jacket" ("Time to give peace a chance", March 6) and retire from the role of war reporter, I very much hope that he will find a role where he will bring to the reader, listener or viewer the same succinct, straightforward and professional reporting that he has provided during the last 30 years, very often under the most difficult of circumstances.

Mr Bell states that he did not choose the career, rather it chose him. I am very grateful that the choice was made and wish him well for the future.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN FISHER,
The Lodge,
Tarrant Monkton,
Blandford Forum, Dorset,
March 6.

Lottery changes

From Mr I. N. G. Selwyn

Sir, The changes in the Lottery rules for those with three correct numbers (letters, March 8) imply that, currently, the group of £10 winners is not using up the segment of cash available for it.

The natural quid pro quo to the proposed scaling down is that, in most weeks, the three-number prize should be more than £10.

Yours faithfully,
I. N. G. SELWYN,
32 St Mary's Avenue,
Northwood, Middlesex.

From Miss Sally Jackson

Sir, I buy my lottery tickets for eight weeks at a time. I was under the impression that I have a contract with Camelot which lasts until the April 6 draw and includes a guaranteed £10 minimum prize.

Surely even if Camelot can get away with this shabby change to their regulations, they cannot do it at such short notice. I believe legally contracts can only be changed with the agreement of both parties.

Yours faithfully,
SALLY JACKSON,
The Folly,
High Street, Buxted, East Sussex.

From Mr Mark A. P. Groves

Sir, I am bemused by Mr Morton's letter (March 8) concerning a £10 win. Surely you are £10 better off by winning £10 than by not? Or is this just the difference between optimism and pessimism?

Yours faithfully,
MARK GROVES,
Warren Down, Burcombe Lane,
Wilton, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

From Mr Phil Hayes

Sir, Whilst I agree entirely with your leader today on those charlatans at Camelot, I must point out that Red Rum did not win the Grand National three times running — unless you mean literally running, as opposed to walking.

His third victory in 1977 was uncoupled from his second in 1974 by L'Escargot (1975) and Rag Trade (1976).

Yours faithfully,
P. HAYES,
27 Hazelwood Lane,
Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire,
March 8.

NEWS

Mortgage price war intensifies

The mortgage price war intensified yesterday after the Chancellor announced his third interest rate cut in four months. High Street lenders led by the Halifax, the biggest building society, immediately shaved a quarter of a percentage point off their home loan rates to about 7.25 per cent. But the Bradford & Bingley reduced one of its variable rates to 6 per cent. Pages 1, 21

Pigeon fancier raids Trafalgar Square

A dearth of woodpigeons before Christmas is likely to have triggered the theft of feral birds from Trafalgar Square. Police hunting a man who is believed to have trapped and carried away 4,000 of the square's birds were told yesterday the urban poacher may have found a ready market. Pages 1, 5, 21

Scots tax block

Labour will block a new Scottish Parliament from raising taxes. Page 1

Cricket, lovely cricket

Almost a billion Indians and Pakistanis — a fifth of the world's population — focus on the cricket world cup. Pages 1, 21, 48

Snub for Adams

Senator Edward Kennedy has refused to see Gerry Adams when the Sinn Féin president arrives in Washington. Page 2

'Devil' woman

Caroline Beale, 32, may have believed she was possessed by the devil when she killed her baby in New York, said her psychiatrist as the civil servant returned to Britain. Page 3

Lung donors

Two people have given part of their lungs to save a dying girl in the first British operation involving living lung donors. Page 4

Researchers called to the bar

Academics are to carry out a long term study into heavy drinking with the help of a £433,278 Government grant and 500 hardened drinkers. Male guinea pigs will have to drink at least 50 units a week, the equivalent of 25 pints. Page 1

Threat to Aviemore

Aviemore ski centre may be forced to close after conservationists blocked a £17 million plan to build the highest railway station in Britain in the Cairngorms. Page 8

Referendum row

Kenneth Clarke and John Major were at odds over a referendum on a single European currency. Page 9

Bosnia mass killer

A former Croat soldier in the Bosnian Serb Army has confessed to participating in the massacre of Muslim civilians. Page 11

China missiles

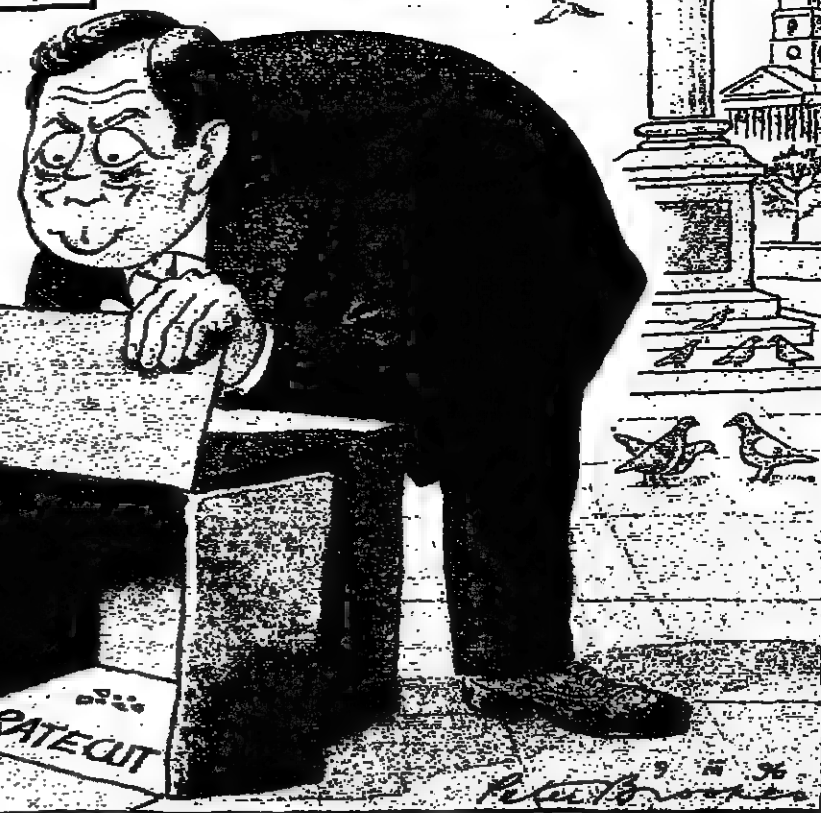
China launched three ballistic missiles off Taiwan, spreading alarm across East Asia and beyond. Page 14

Victory for Dole

Driven by the powerful juggernaut of the Republican Party, Robert Dole routed his competitors in the New York primary. Page 15

NATURE NOTES

Police are investigating the mysterious disappearance of hundreds of pigeons from Trafalgar Square. A man has been seen trapping up to 40 a day by luring them into boxes baited with crumbs. He claims they are for racing, but he is more likely to be selling them for pies. — News item



OPINION

Never had it so good: Why do homeowners remain so sullen in the face of the Government's attempts to stuff their pockets? Page 21

Beyond the boundary: India and Pakistan face each other in the quarter-finals of the World Cup: part cricket and part war. Page 21

The pigeon pie man: Supermarkets and packaged food have estranged carnivorous eating. Page 21

LETTERS

British monarchy: single currency. Page 21

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: Lotteries are the way of the world. But we should stop pretending that they have anything to do with risk, capitalism or privatisation. Page 20

Mary Ann Sieghart: Were my daughters in their late teens, I would certainly want to see to Kids. Page 20

OBITUARIES

Baroness Mairé Hétène de Rothschild: Prebendary Newell Wallbank, Rector of St Bartholomew the Great; Christopher Harner, wartime member of MIS. Page 23

BUSINESS

Jobs: Britain's largest computer company, ICL, reported a £188 million pre-tax loss and said it would cut up to 1,000 jobs. Page 25

Departures: Two senior executives resigned from BAT and Sainsbury in moves that could trigger payouts of up to £1 million each. Page 25

Lloyd's: Lloyd's dispatched letters to 34,000 members, with estimates of how much they will have to pay to settle their debts. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index fell 47.9 points to close at 3710.3. Page 28

ARTS

Eye of calm: Trevor Nunn, appointed to run the National Theatre, would do well to emulate the methods of his predecessor, says Richard Morrison. Page 17

Cruise twisted: Theatre de Complicite's latest production is *Foe*, an updating of Robinson Crusoe. Page 17

Turner revealed: The Tate Gallery has mounted an exhibition of Turner's *Liber Studiorum*. Page 19

CAR 96

Winning Formula: Fans gear up for the new season. Page 45

SPORT

Cricket: Dominic Cork was ruled out of England's World Cup quarter-final against Sri Lanka by a knee injury. Page 48

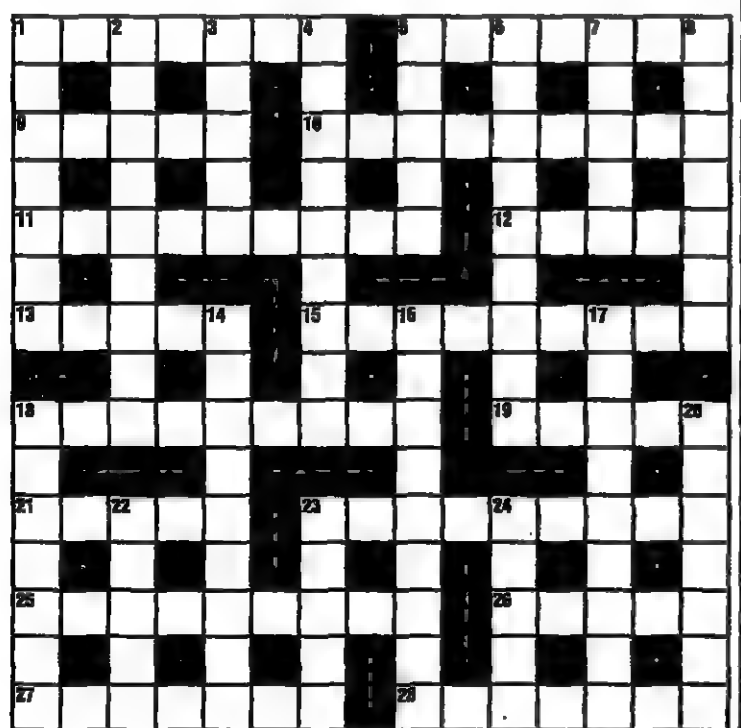
Football: The final Premiership games have again been delayed 24 hours for live television coverage. They will be played on May 5. Page 48

Rugby union: England are unchanged against Ireland but there are doubts about Dean Richards. Wales have dropped Arwel Thomas against France. Page 45

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,111

ABERLOUR A limited edition, 1970 vintage bottle of Aberlour single malt whisky, the only malt whisky to have twice won the prestigious Gold Medal and Pot Still Trophy at the International Wine & Spirit Competition, will be given for the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address



- ACROSS**
- 1 Retish boat getting in winning position (7).
 - 5 Having defective hearing, one abandoned the blower (7).
 - 9 In which three couples get together for sex (5).
 - 10 Dog is sort of terrier? Vet's entry is not conclusive (9).
 - 11 Medusa's a sweet person (9).
 - 12 A self-treatment for invalid (5).
 - 13 Cause of ferment as yet unsettled (5).
 - 15 Immediately at the scene of the action (2,3,4).
 - 19 Tyre feels damaged, all-in (9).
 - 20 Thus about to become indifferent to pain (5).
 - 21 He told stories about river and ocean (5).
 - 23 One beret I collected as object of particular loathing (4,5).
 - 25 Showing agreement? Not 1, for one (9).
 - 27 Remove outside page — it's empty (7).
 - 28 Irregular mark for American's theme in school (7).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,105

STREAMER BUFFALO
P X A E R O M E
L A I N S A L O O N B A R
E E S I O N S
C O U R S E T R E A T
D E I G N I N G R A M E
V A N A I E
S P E C I A T O R N A W A R
T U G G E R S O
A B I N E W E A K E R S E X
R A A A N I T T E
T O P P I N G P I A N O
U U E U E N O
P O P P E R A N N I D E
L A S T W E E K S W I N N E R S: G Taylor, Henfield, West Sussex; P Donovan, London; A and J Aston Smith, Oxford; D Lawrence, Chesham, Gloucestershire; A Rankin, Banbury, Kincardineshire.

- DOWN**
- 1 Overcome with laughter and delight? Not he! (7).
 - 2 Arouse it and it'll eat wildly (9).
 - 3 King James, for example (5).
 - 4 Standard ecclesiastical sin — meanness (9).
 - 5 Fellow's suit (5).
 - 6 Rigidity shown in second row with head (9).
 - 7 Celebrate lifting of prize in America (5).
 - 8 Most generous and, to some extent, popular gesture (7).
 - 14 As divine female, I'm the one to call (9).
 - 16 Island's legislative assembly in America (3,6).
 - 17 Financially far-sighted, having expert see books (9).
 - 18 Detectives, following young creature up, relaxed (7).
 - 20 It runs fast and sharp, we hear (7).
 - 22 Finishing as you began, you stop when it's dawn (5).
 - 23 British people provide support (5).
 - 24 Rocket launchers signal, finally, with sound of hoover (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,110

G E N D A R M E P U L P I T
A E R U F T A R
M O V E R G H O S T T O W N
E S S I O N S
C A B E S S I N G C O D E
O M N E A
C R O E S S U S Y E U R N
K R P E A
P E G L E G C R E A S E D
G E M I T A I L U A
A A A T E A S B
B A R R I S T E R T H E M E
B K N E E I N D
E N S I O N B R U N E T T E

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TIMES WEATHERCALL

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0881 500 followed by the code

York	701
East of England	702
East Midlands	703
East of Scotland	704
East of Wales	705
East of Ireland	706
East of France	707
East of Germany	708
East of Spain	709
East of Italy	710
East of Greece	711
East of Turkey	712
East of Russia	713
East of China	714
East of India	715
East of Japan	716
East of Korea	717
East of Australia	718
East of New Zealand	719
East of South America	720
East of Africa	721
East of Europe	722
East of Asia	723
East of Oceania	724
East of Antarctica	725
East of the world	726

Weathercall is charged at 39p per minute (cheap rate) and 49p per minute at all other times.

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0836 401 followed by the code

London & SE traffic, roadworks	731
East of London	732
East of Kent/Sussex/Herts	733
East of Essex	734
East of Bedfordshire	735
East of Cambridgeshire	736
East of Lincolnshire	737
East of North Yorkshire	738
East of Yorkshire	739
East of Lancashire	740
East of Cheshire	741
East of Derbyshire	742
East of Staffordshire	743
East of Warwickshire	744
East of Gloucestershire	745
East of Wiltshire	746
East of Dorset	747
East of Devon	748
East of Cornwall	749
East of Wales	750

HOURS OF DARKNESS

Today Sun rises: 6.26 am Sun sets: 5.56 pm

Tomorrow Sun rises: 6.26 am Sun sets: 5.57 pm

Last quarter Moon 12.00 am

London 5.55 pm to 6.26 am

Edinburgh 6.04 pm to 6.41 am

Manchester 6.02 pm to 6.38 am

Preston 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

Cardiff 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

Belfast 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

London 5.57 pm to 6.23 am

Edinburgh 6.07 pm to 6.33 am

Manchester 6.04 pm to 6.33 am

Preston 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

Cardiff 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

Belfast 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

London 5.57 pm to 6.23 am

Edinburgh 6.07 pm to 6.33 am

Manchester 6.04 pm to 6.33 am

Preston 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

Cardiff 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

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Manchester 6.04 pm to 6.33 am

Preston 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

Cardiff 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

Belfast 6.19 pm to 6.44 am

FORECAST

General: England and Wales will become drier with bright spells as a band of rain moves north into Scotland. There will be a few showers, with the sunniest interludes likely in the south.

Scotland and Northern Ireland will have showers. Outbreaks of showery rain and snow will spread north. The northwest and much of Northern Ireland will be brighter, with scattered showers. Rain will spread into west Scotland and Northern Ireland later.

London, SE England, East S, SW, NW England, Midlands, Channel Isles, Wales: Mostly bright with sunny spells, occasional showers. Wind southeast light or moderate. Max 8C (46F).

E Anglia, E, Cent N, NE England, Lakes, IOM, Borders, SW Scotland: Mostly dry, bright spells developing with some sunshine. Wind

southeast light, occasionally moderate. Max 5C to 7C (41F to 45F).

Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Cent Highlands: Outbreaks of rain or snow; snow mainly on hills. Wind southeast light or moderate. Max 5C (43F).

Argyll, NW Scotland, N Ireland: Bright spells, scattered showers. Rain later. Wind southeast fresh. Max 7C (45F).

Orkney, Shetland: Rather cloudy, showers of rain or sleet. Wind southeast fresh or strong, locally gale force. Max 6C (43F).

Outlook: Scattered showers, some wintry in east. Elsewhere dry with bright spells.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=light cloud; d=dizzle; ds=dust storm; dsh=dust; f=fog; g=gale; h=halt; m=moderate; r=rain; s=sleet; t=tornado; w=wind; x=other; y=other; z=other; 0=other; 1=other; 2=other; 3=other; 4=other; 5=other; 6=other; 7=other; 8=other; 9=other; 10=other; 11=other; 12=other; 13=other; 14=other; 15=other; 16=other; 17=other; 18=other; 19=other; 20=other; 21=other; 22=other; 23=other; 24=other; 25=other; 26=other; 27=other; 28=other; 29=other; 30=other; 31=other; 32=other; 33=other; 34=other; 35=other; 36=other; 37=other; 38=other; 39=other; 40=other; 41=other; 42=other; 43=other; 44=other; 45=other; 46=other; 47=other; 48=other; 49=other; 50=other; 51=other; 52=other; 53=other; 54=other; 55=other; 56=other; 57=other; 58=other; 59=other; 60=other; 61=other; 62=other; 63=other; 64=other; 65=other; 66=other; 67=other; 68=other; 69=other; 70=other; 71=other; 72=other; 73=other; 74=other; 75=other; 76=other; 77=other; 78=other; 79=other; 80=other; 81=other; 82=other; 83=other; 84=other; 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542=other; 543=other; 544=other; 545=other; 546=other; 547=other; 548=other; 549=other; 550=other; 551=other; 5



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share sale

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Thursday
Friday

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Double-barrelled
tour de force for
British tourism



SPORT 43-48

Cork's withdrawal
robs England
attack of sparkle

HIDDEN ASSETS
AT THE BANK
OF ENGLAND
Page 27

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY MARCH 9 1996



Blind faith: Hamish Grossart, left, chairman of Eclipse Blinds, and Bill MacDonald, managing director, celebrate a 29 per cent advance in pre-tax profits, to £4.54 million, and a return to dividends with a final payout of 1p for the year to December 31, reflecting a strong recovery

Slump on Wall Street overshadows rate cut

By JANET BUSH IN LONDON AND RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

LONDON'S financial markets showed scarcely any reaction to the widely expected quarter-point cut in base rates, to 6 per cent, announced yesterday morning, but were then knocked sideways by a shock wave of selling on Wall Street.

The Bank of England announced the cut in base rates during its routine money market operations yesterday. The move had been expected after Thursday's monetary meeting between Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank.

Then, Wall Street reacted

dramatically to news that the US economy had generated 705,000 new non-agricultural jobs in February, the biggest increase in any month for 12 years. The unemployment rate dropped sharply from 5.8 per cent in January to 5.5 per cent in February, which economists said virtually ruled out a further cut in US interest rates. Many had expected another cut at the meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee on March 26.

Within minutes of the figures, the price of the 30-year benchmark Treasury bond slumped by three points. This triggered a collapse in the Dow Jones industrial average, which plunged by more than 100 points in the first 15 minutes of trading.

By early afternoon, the Dow

had recovered a little to stand 7225 lower, at 5,569.44. In London, the FT-SE 100 index closed down 47.9, at 3,710.3, having been 72 points lower at its worst levels of the day. London markets drew little comfort from yesterday's rate cut, given events in the US. European markets, too, were caught in the downdraught.

After the base rate change was announced, Mr Clarke said that he was confident that the cut, the third quarter-point cut since December, would not jeopardise the Government's inflation target. He noted that the economy is growing below trend, with activity abroad contributing to weakness, and that this should continue to exert downward pressure on inflation.

Several City analysts have

been forecasting further cuts in base rates, perhaps to as low as 5 per cent. However, one of the helpful factors in the background had been the prospect of rates falling overseas, notably in Germany and America. Now, some are arguing that US rates have bottomed out.

The 705,000 rise in jobs was about twice what Wall Street economists had expected. It was a difficult figure to call because of blizzards and government shutdowns over the US budget impasse, which led to an alarmingly weak picture for jobs in December and January. Until yesterday's figures, which coincided with another blizzard engulfing New York, it was guesswork whether the weakness was fundamental or simply due to

these one-off factors. The latter appears to have been the case.

William Sullivan, money market analyst for Dean Witter, the broking firm, said: "This is outright panic." He concluded that the US economy is accelerating, that falling unemployment means a build-up of pay pressures and that this is likely to lead to higher inflation.

Others, however, pointed out that other indicators of the state of the US economy had not shown the strength seen in yesterday's labour market figures. The most recent report, from US purchasing managers, painted a weak picture, as did the Conference Board and various surveys of activity in the jobs market.

Leaders act, page 29
Anne Ashworth, page 31

Debt estimates in the post for 34,000 Lloyd's names

LLOYD'S of London finally dispatched letters last night to 34,000 anxious names, providing them with estimates of how much they will have to pay to settle finally all their debts with the society.

Lloyd's, which has lost more than £9 billion in the past five years, is offering names a £2.8 billion settlement package in a bid to put its problems firmly in the past.

David Rowland, chairman of the society, said: "I think that everyone concerned with this society wants to bring this episode to an end."

The indicative statements provide estimates of a name's "finality" bill after deducting their share of the settlement offer.

For most names the finality bill will not exceed £100,000—over and above their funds at Lloyd's. And for an estimated half of the 34,000 names the



Rowland: 'end of an episode'

bill will not exceed their funds at Lloyd's, which are the assets held to support a name's underwriting.

The statements are only estimates and the final figures are due at the end of May. However, for 95 per cent of names the variation between

the two bills will be limited to £15,000. To help those names unable to pay their bills, Lloyd's has set aside about £150 million, called Tranche 4. To apply for a share names have to provide details of their financial position.

There are no firm rules on what a name's financial position needs to be to qualify but a Lloyd's spokesman said yesterday: "The arrangements will be an improvement on Hardship (the market's former bankruptcy scheme)."

Names can also pay their bills in instalments and, for those who risk losing their homes, Lloyd's is trying to put together a special mortgage facility.

Names will vote on whether to accept the £2.8 billion offer, based on the final statements, at the annual meeting of Lloyd's on July 15.

Weekend money, page 38

Halifax ends Warburg role in float

THE Halifax Building Society has abruptly replaced SBC Warburg as corporate finance adviser to its £9 billion stock market flotation (Anne Ashworth writes). Deutsche Morgan Grenfell was named yesterday as the new adviser.

Behind the society's move lay the departure of two key individuals working on the Halifax conversion. Anthony Brooks went to BZW, and Derek Higgs left for the Prudential. The society also cited a "potential conflict of interest".

David Gilchrist, of the Halifax, said the society started to become concerned about its relationship with SBC Warburg several months ago. "The conversion will be a long-running and complex transaction. We want... a commitment to continuity."

The society added that there would be no delay in the float scheduled for summer 1997.

Resigned to the prospect of £1m

By JON ASHWORTH

TWO senior UK executives resigned yesterday in moves that could trigger payouts of up to £1 million each. George Greener quit abruptly as head of BAT Industries financial services operations, which include Allied Dunbar and Eagle Star, while David Quarumby stepped down as joint managing director of J Sainsbury, the latest of several management changes at the supermarket group.

Both men were on two-year rolling contracts and could win compensation of up to £1 million each, further stoking criticism of levels of boardroom pay. Mr Greener, who joined BAT five years ago

after 20 years with Mars, the confectionery group, earned £852,985 in salary, bonuses and pension contributions in 1994, the latest figures available.

BAT said that Mr Greener was resigning as chief executive of BAT UK Financial Services and as chairman of Allied Dunbar, Eagle Star and Threadneedle Asset Management "by mutual consent". The move comes two days after BAT announced a sweeping review of its UK financial services operations.

The company insisted the parting was amicable, in spite of talk of a personality clash between Mr Greener and Martin Broughton, chief executive of BAT. Compensation has yet to be agreed but

the company expects to settle for less than the two-year term of Mr Greener's contract. Mr Greener is replaced by Sandy Leitch, Allied Dunbar's chief executive.

Mr Quarumby, 54, leaves Sainsbury's at the end of next month. He earned £450,000 last year, including benefits and pension contributions. David Sainsbury, chairman, accepted his resignation "with regret", adding: "I respect his wish to pursue other interests." Mr Quarumby's decision comes soon after a series of board changes, in which he was given the lesser role of managing director of group services and business development at the supermarket group.

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

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BUSINESS TODAY

FT-SE 100	3710.3	(-47.9)
Yield	3.89%	
FT-SE All share	1839.04	(-19.94)
Nikkei	20155.87	(+198.72)
New York		
Dow Jones	5380.28	(-91.41)*
S&P Composite	644.63	(-9.02)*

		
Federal Funds.....	5 1/4%*	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	9 1/4%*	(9 1/4%)
Yield	8.67%*	(8.46%)

	LONDON MONEY		
with interbank	6 ³ / ₄ %	(6 ³ / ₄ %)	
the long gilt			
ure (Jun)	104 ³ / ₄ %	(105 ¹ / ₄ %)	

NEW YORK		
Dow Jones	5380.28	(-91.41)
S&P 500	644.63	(-9.02)

Oil	1.5241	(1.5305)
DM	2.2657	(2.2637)
FF	7.7650	(7.7510)
Yen	1.8382	(1.8389)
E index	161.44	(161.21)
	83.7	(83.7)

DOLLAR	
don't	
1.4870* (1.4764)	
5.0920* (5.0505)	

BRITISH 15-DAY (May)	\$17.25	(\$17.45)
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15-day (May)	\$17.25 (\$17.45)
GOLD	

* denotes midday trading price	
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Granada deal

Granada yesterday clinched its first big disposal since the £3.9 billion acquisition of Forte in January when it agreed a £122 million deal to sell the White Hart chain of hotels to Regal. The number of Regal hotels will rise from 22 to 82.

Housing slide hits Hambro

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

THE cost of assimilating 300 extra branches into its estate agency chain caused losses at Hambro Countrywide to deepen to £3.89 million (£3.86 million loss) for the year to December 31. Harry Hill, managing director, admitted he had not expected a further slide in the housing market when his firm bought the estate agency arm of the Nationwide Building Society for £1 in October 1994. However, after a first-half loss of £5.82 million, Hambro made a pre-tax profit of £1.93 million in the six months to December. While Inland Revenue figures show house sales fell by 11 per cent, Mr Hill said Countrywide suffered a fall of only 1.8 per cent.

The estate agency, which has 740 offices, the largest chain in the UK, reported a 25 per cent increase in newly agreed house sales in January and February, compared with the same period last year. Countrywide arranged 21,662 mortgages worth £969 million. The loss per share increased to 2.16p from 1.83p and no dividend will be paid (1994: 0.05p). Total turnover increased to £151 million (£106 million). The estate agency division caused the greatest loss at £21 million (£6 million loss).

Tempus, page 28
Weekend Money, pages 27 and 34

Granada agrees to sell White Hart hotels to Regal

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

GRANADA yesterday clinched its first big disposal since the £3.9 billion acquisition of Forte in January when it agreed a £122 million deal to sell the White Hart chain of hotels to Regal.

The acquisition will increase the hotels under Regal's control from 22 to 82. Regal had provisionally agreed the purchase of the chain with Forte in a cash and shares deal, before the Granada takeover. The deal with Granada is understood to be all cash and excludes seven hotels in the original package. Regal will use a mixture of

debt and equity to fund the purchase and hoped to make an announcement "reasonably quickly" to shareholders on the structure of the deal's financing. A rights issue is likely to double capitalisation to £50 million, but Regal said it had the support of its big shareholders and bankers to proceed. Regal shares were suspended at 44p after the earlier Forte agreement. Granada preserves an opt-out clause in the agreement should Regal run into financing problems.

Charles Vere Nicoll, chief executive, said that the com-

pany, which has doubled in size each year since it was founded three years ago, would now concentrate on absorbing the new hotels. He said: "We are going to have to take stock and I will not proceed with more growth until the results prove the chain has been absorbed."

Granada is keen to sell a number of assets acquired in the Forte takeover, including the Meridian and Exclusive hotel chains and the 68 per cent stake in the Savoy. Regal also unveiled its full-year results yesterday with profits rising 400 per cent to £2.9 million on turnover up 230 per cent to £18.1 million. The company announced its first ever dividend of 0.5p, to be paid on June 1. CDL, the Hong Kong hotel company, is aiming next month to float about 40 per cent of Millennium & Copthorne, its UK subsidiary, in London. CDL is hoping to raise about £150 million from the float, which will value the chain at £350 million. About £100 million of the proceeds will be used to reduce Millennium's debt. Millennium owns 23 business hotels in Europe and America, including the Gloucester, Bailey's and Chelsea hotels in London, and has a 42 per cent stake in the Plaza Hotel, New York.

Tempus, page 28

Two rail support firms sold

Two more companies that maintain the rail network were yesterday sold to two joint ventures.

A link between GEC Alsthom and Tarmac bought the largest, covering the central area of the country, for £18.8 million while a joint venture between Amey and the management of the western division at Swindon bought that area's maintenance company for £15 million.

Water talks

Speculation continued in the City yesterday that a US company, believed to be California Water Services, is to move on South West Water early next week. Meanwhile Wessex Water, which announced a proposed bid for South West, and the target company remained locked in talks with their merchant banks.

Full throttle

Malaya Group, the motor distributor, raised full-year pre-tax profits 283 per cent to £2.09 million (£617,000) in the year to December 31. Turnover advanced to £315 million (£170 million). The final dividend of 0.33p, payable May 21, gives a total of 0.66p (0.4p) for the year, from earnings of 0.96p (0.62p) a share.

Litho ahead

Litho, the printing industry supplier, raised pre-tax profits 24 per cent to £6.6 million in the year to December 31. Turnover rose 5 per cent to £65 million. The total dividend rises 11 per cent to 7.6p with a final dividend of 4.64p payable on May 30.

Bid rumours swirl as Tiny sells out

I was on Thursday that The Times let it be known that Tiny Rowland, someone who requires little introduction, had decided to sell a near 6 per cent share stake in Lonrho, the multinational conglomerate he created, to Dieter Bock, the company's chief executive. Rowland's share sale relates to a "put" and "call" arrangement struck in December 1992, when Mr Bock joined Lonrho to work alongside Rowland as joint chief executive.

I well recall interviewing Rowland and Bock at the onset of their corporate honeymoon.

MM: How will the joint roles work? How do you envisage dividing responsibilities?

Rowland: There will not be any clear cut division of responsibilities. Think of us as indivisible.

Bock: It is important that we have a constant dialogue in order to reach decisions together. We have identical interests, the interests of the company. I cannot see the possibility of any conflict of interest between us.

Since then, much water has passed and many quotations. Niceties gave way to not so niceties. It was Rowland (who else?) who felt compelled to declare, courtesy of The Sunday Times: "I am a fully paid-up member of this country's Inland Revenue club. I have always paid my tax in this country. Mr Bock, however, doesn't own a single asset in his own name, except his bicycle — and perhaps his wife."

Many businessmen, after telephone conversations with scribes, have a habit of telephoning back to emphasise that certain statements are off the record. Rowland, uniquely, has a habit of telephoning back to emphasise that remarks, such as the above, are on the record.

Bock, Lonrho's largest shareholder, with an 18.6 per cent stake acquired at an average price of 93p, waved in a bevy of non-executive directors (anathema to Rowland) and launched coups. First against Rowland's closest

boardroom colleagues, such as René Leclézio, Robert Dunlop and Paul Spicer (dubbed the "pensioners") then against Rowland. The first, in the autumn of 1994, failed: the second left Rowland with the prospect of jettisoning between assets as president and the third brought about his unceremonious dismissal last March.

In the event, Rowland has lost little time in exercising his "put" on Bock. Although the option arrangement dates back to 1992, it did not come into play until December 9, 1995. As of then, either party could enforce a share sale over a period of 12 months. Official confirmation came by way of a brief statement that Yeoman Investments (Rowland's vehicle) had informed

5.85 per cent in exchange for £91 million, casts a shorter shadow than before.

Rowland, for his part, claims that the "sex" has gone out of Lonrho and has timed his sale to illustrate his implacable opposition to the company's proposed merger of its platinum interests with Gencor's Impala Platinum. Rowland insists that the location of Lonrho's platinum operations would have yielded greater value. Such views received scant support at last week's AGM, where Rowland, through a spokesman, alleged that Bock did not spend sufficient time on Lonrho's business. Sir John Leahy, the former ambassador to South Africa, who now chairs Lonrho, pointed out that since Mr Bock became Lonrho's chief executive, profits had increased from £59 million to £161 million, while the share price had risen from 75p to 192p.

Bock's shareholding in Lonrho will rise to close on 25 per cent but the message is that no placing of Rowland's stake is imminent. Rowland is said to be keeping a watchful eye on Sir Rocco Forte's return to the hotel scene, but in reality harbours an interest in the Savoy's establishments. As he recently put it: "I wouldn't require a partner to purchase the Savoy."

James Capel, which happens to be Lonrho's stockbroker, opined in January that the proposed demerger "constitutes an imaginative step towards crystallising and releasing the underlying value in Lonrho shares". According to Capel, the "aggregate underlying value" of Lonrho's paper is in the region of 247p. Lonrho's quote, currently 191p, recently touched 217p as speculation mounted that, come a demerger, Lonrho Mining could well attract a full-scale takeover bid from the likes of Anglo-American or Gencor. What should not be ruled out is the likelihood of offers for Lonrho's mining operations before the much heralded demerger. Rowland, incidentally, has retained some 3 million shares.

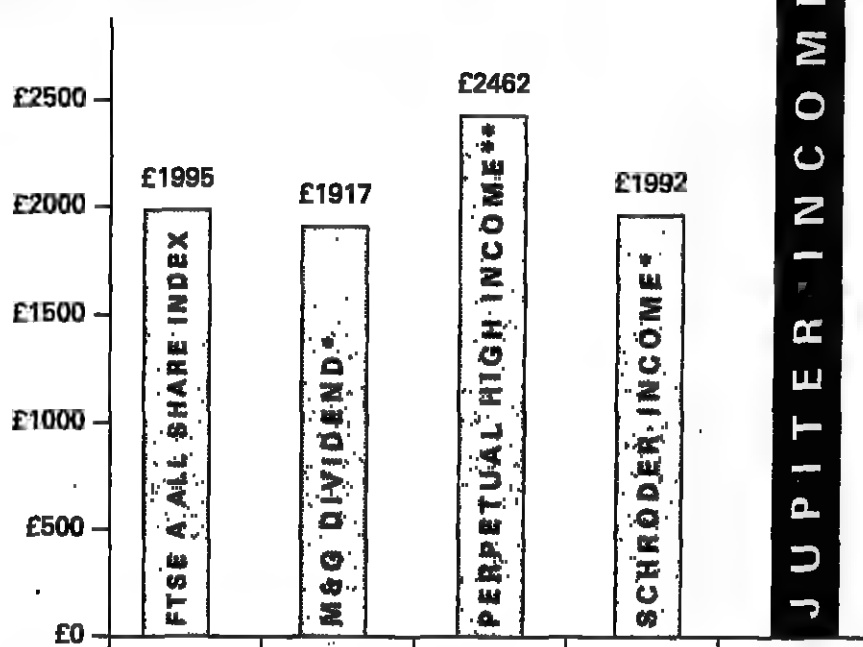


MELVYN MARKKUS

Laerstate BV (Bock's Netherlands registered vehicle) on Tuesday of its intentions to sell 45.5 million shares representing 5.85 per cent of the equity. The price has been struck at 200.36p, based on recent market averages.

Indications from the Lonrho camp are that Bock has the finance in place to complete the transaction, possibly next week. It should be borne in mind that Bock and Rowland harbour deep suspicions over the calibre of each other's finances. Lonrho's directors, ever fearful that Tiny's hand might rise and smite their "normalisation" process in some vengeful and extraordinary way, are reputed to be delighted: the theory being that Rowland, minus

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Austria Sch	15.42	15.42	Netherlands Gld	2.897	2.457
Belgium Fr	19.31	45.31	New Zealand \$	2.41	2.19
Canada \$	2.208	2.048	Norway Kr	10.48	9.83
Cyprus Cyp£	0.732	0.687	Portugal Esc	246.00	227.50
Denmark Kr	0.38	0.38	S Africa Rd	0.55	0.75
Finland Mk	7.80	6.85	Spain Ptas	167.50	164.50
France Fr	5.18	7.81	Sweden Kr	11.01	10.21
Germany Dr	2.42	2.21	Switzerland Fr	1.97	1.79
Greece Dr	360.00	365.00	Turkey Lira	107746	96745.0
Hong Kong \$	12.47	11.47	USA \$	1.627	1.497
India R	1.02	0.94			
Israel Shk	8.1300	4.4800			
Italy Lira	2483.00	2338.00			

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THE SUNDAYTIMES

By agreeing the largest merger in corporate history, Ciba and Sandoz threw the drugs industry into turmoil. British companies may be forced to react...

Business - The Sunday Times tomorrow

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£250,000 - £1 million	3.375	2.931
£100,000 - £249,999	3.250	2.438
£25,000 - £99,999	3.000	2.250
£2,000 - £24,999	2.500	1.875
£500 - £1,999	2.125	1.594
£0 - £499	2.125	1.594
HIGH INTEREST BUSINESS ACCOUNT - 14 days' notice.		
£250,000 +	4.750	3.563
£100,000 - £249,999	4.625	3.469
£25,000 - £99,999	4.375	3.281
£10,000 - £24,999	3.875	2.906
£2,000 - £9,999	3.125	2.344
CLIENT'S PREMIUM ACCOUNT		
£1 million +	4.125	3.094
£250,000 - £999,999	4.000	3.000
£100,000 - £249,999	3.875	2.906
£25,000 - £99,999	3.500	2.625
£10,000 - £24,999	3.250	2.438
BARCLAYS COMMUNITY ACCOUNT. (An interest bearing current account for clubs, charities, churches and societies.) No minimum balance. Interest paid quarterly.		
£25,000 +	2.000	1.500
£10,000 - £24,999	1.500	1.125
£5,000 - £9,999	1.000	0.750
£0 - £4,999	0.750	0.563
SEVEN DAY DEPOSIT ACCOUNT. (A seven days' notice account.) No minimum balance. Interest paid half-yearly.		
	0.500	0.375

* GROSS RATE is the contractual rate of interest payable not taking account of the deduction of income tax at the basic rate.

* NET RATE is the rate which would be payable after allowing for the deduction of income tax at the current basic rate from the gross rate. Basic Rate Tax (BRT) may vary and therefore the net rate is given as an illustration only. BRT will only be deducted in those cases where the Bank is obliged to do so.

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A WORKING WEEK FOR: ADELE BISS

Home and away life of ambassador for tourism

Marianne Curphey meets the woman whose job is to sell the British holiday industry to the Treasury and abroad

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

week on the north coast of Devon — all in the name of work.

But then, as Britain's ambassador for tourism in her role as chairwoman of both the English Tourist Board and the British Tourist Authority, taking a British holiday is part of the job. She even has a signed certificate on her wall proclaiming she has spent a night at a caravan park. She is very proud of it.

"It was my first time and I enjoyed it so much I'd do it again," she says. It is a far cry from the chalet in Switzerland she part-owns and still visits with her husband and 12-year-old son.

Her office is in a tower block in the centre of Hammersmith in west London, and a long way from the picture postcard images of the capital that have so successfully lured foreign tourists to our shores.

Last Wednesday Ms Biss and Virginia Bottomley, Secretary of State for National Heritage, met at Madame Tussaud's — one of the UK's most popular fee-charging tourist attractions — to brief travel journalists on the success of the BTA's marketing campaign.

In 1995 overseas visitors to Britain totalled 23.6 million, a rise of 12 per cent on the previous record of 21 million set in 1994. Between them they spent £11.7 billion.

Yesterday she flew back from Madrid after meeting the travel trade at celebrations to mark 30 years of a BTA presence in Spain. Earlier in the week she had met the Museums and Galleries Commission to discuss ways of using British culture to lure foreign visitors to our shores. Over the coming weeks she will be helping

the industry to prepare for the all-important start to the holiday season over the Easter weekend.

Her role as chairwoman of the BTA and ETB involves two to three days' work every week, for which she is paid £41,000, although meetings and travel inevitably take up more of her time. She was appointed joint chairman of the ETB and BTA in 1994 after the Department of National Heritage had spent several months searching for a replacement for Bill Davis.

When not discussing the future of British tourism and haranguing Treasury ministers to take her industry seriously, she pursues her other interests as a governor of Middlesex University, a non-executive director of Harry Ramsden's (the Yorkshire fish and chip emporium), and a non-executive director of European Passenger Services.

One subject that she refuses to discuss is the impact of the recent IRA bombings on British tourism, fearing that

might be misinterpreted. "I did five press interviews in Madrid and not a single journalist asked about it," she says. "I don't think it is helpful to discuss it."

The BTA's official line on the bombings is that they have made very little difference to bookings or inquiries to overseas offices. Incoming tour operators tell a different story, however. Richard Cail, operations director of JAC Travel, one of the UK's biggest incoming tour operators, said that immediately after the Docklands bomb a number of American holiday groups cancelled or asked to be transferred out of London to regional cities.

She is also reluctant to talk about herself, although she lets slip that she has recently learnt to ride a bicycle, which will be useful, no doubt, for pedalling through English country lanes. At 51 she spends more than an hour every Saturday morning putting herself through a punishing aerobics class, and has a



Travel agent: Adele Biss, whose marketing campaigns seek to portray the best of Britain

swimming lesson once a week.

The view from her office on the tenth floor is of the Hammersmith flyover and Wormwood Scrubs prison. Roadworks rumble away below while she expounds the virtues of new technology and fiddles with her hair as the photographer snaps away.

"I've been learning to use the

word processor, but I had to teach myself to type first," she says. "So I was sitting with the instruction tape on full volume at 8.30am tapping in JJJ JJJ JJJ."

This was before she chaired a meeting of tourist board heads and met me for coffee. Her office is small, neat and ordered, like herself. She admits that being

thrust into the limelight as the public image of tourism in Britain two-and-a-half years ago was something of a shock.

"For the first photocall on the day I became chairman, the Department of National Heritage wanted to invite a few journalists for a briefing at the secretary of state's office. I thought that would be a bit

dull, and I wanted to convey the fun of tourism and suggested a photo-shoot on a red London bus. In the end, it was decided I should pose in front of the Horse Guards and I remember standing there in front of a wall of cameras with the photographers shouting: 'Just a little closer to the horse, please, Ms Biss'. There were lots of tourists taking pictures as well — they must have thought I was a celebrity. But I was edging closer and closer to the horse's teeth, and I am rather scared of horses."

She escaped unscathed and spent the rest of her first year travelling around Britain sampling domestic tourism and using half-term holidays with her son to experience the traditional seaside delights of Blackpool. She claims that when she travels she is rarely off-duty and takes every opportunity to chat to fellow tourists: "I am the only person I know who goes sightseeing and staying in lovely places as part of my job, and I like to know what other people think about the place."

On one such occasion she joined, uninvited, a party of American tourists on London Bridge, and was forced to identify herself after the tour guide accused her of trying to tag along for free.

Ms Biss never tires of extolling the economic advantages of tourism, which is now worth £36 billion to the UK economy, generating about £100 million in revenues every day, and 1.5 million jobs.

Nevertheless, she has found it difficult to convince the Treasury and opinion-formers that tourism is as important an industry as financial services or motor manufacturing.

Over the past five years grant-in-aid for the ETB has been cut and half its 122 staff have gone. Fewer have been cut from the BTA, which is responsible for selling Britain to the overseas market.

In spite of these setbacks she has initiated a series of marketing campaigns to try to make the best of Britain. One of the first, the Seaside campaign, aimed to persuade Britons to take a break to rediscover the beauty of the coastline around their island.

The London Arts Season and the Festival of Arts and Culture were established to promote the capital

and the regions during the off-season months of January, February and March, and to help to swell attendances at concert halls, theatres, museums and art galleries at a time when business is traditionally at its slackest.

As part of her struggle to convince the Government of the value of tourism, she sent a complete set of guidebooks and accommodation listings to every member of the Cabinet last year, and will do so again this spring. She claims to have converted a number of them to the joys of the British holiday, although Virginia Bottomley has always spent family holidays on the Isle of Wight.

Ms Biss believes that the real challenge is to persuade those Britons who abandoned traditional "bucket-and-spade" seaside holidays in the 1970s when air fares became cheaper and there was "a great rush to the Costas".

Her first job was in tourism, as a courier taking coach parties on a tour of seven cities in ten days. After studying economics at University College

London, she became one of the first women to join Unilever's graduate trainee scheme. Even now, she uses the skills she learnt there. "It was the university of marketing," Ms Biss says. "Now, whenever I am trying to get a message across, I go through the mental checklist of the steps that I need to take."

From there, she joined the holiday company that later became Thomson Travel, now the UK's biggest tour operator, for seven years. After a brief spell with an advertising agency, she set up Biss Lancaster, the successful public relations company, with Graham Lancaster, in 1978. Ms Biss sold her stake in the company seven years later but stayed on for another four years as a consultant. When she left, it employed 90 people and had represented Woolworths during its defence against the bid from Dixons, and later represented Dixons when it was subject to a hostile bid from Kingfisher.

"It was nice to be on the winning side on both occasions," she said.

Her contract comes up for renewal in May and she says that it would be "a privilege" to be kept on for a further three years. She expects to learn of the decision within weeks.

"I am the only person I know who sightsees and stays in lovely places as part of my job"

"In five press interviews IRA bombs weren't mentioned. It's not helpful to discuss it"

HIDDEN ASSETS

Museum of money in mint condition at Bank

Joanna Pitman finds a gem of history in Old Lady's vaults

In the three hundred years of her life, the Old Lady has thrown little away. The prudence of our national bankers over the generations has meant that today the Bank of England museum has managed to turn itself, particularly since its extension and refurbishment in 1988, into a place of unexpected magnificence.

"Most bank museums are simply full of coins with dozens of bank notes pasted all over the walls — wonderful for numismatists and trainees but less rewarding for the general interest visitor," said John Keyworth, the curator. "The Bank of England museum has a surprising breadth to its collection. Overall, it offers a remarkable social history of the last 300 years."

Architectural historians will be interested in the principal feature of the museum, a reproduction of the original Bank Stock Office. This was designed by Sir John Soane in 1793, a hall of austere simplicity, reminiscent of the interior of a Byzantine church. Using records kept at the Soane's Museum, the Bank of Eng-

land was able to build a true reproduction down to the original dimensions and to recreate the lunette windows and plasterwork according to the original details.

Being a single-storey construction, however, Soane's building was demolished in the 1920s, leaving only the massive outer walls, and replaced by a larger seven-storey building offering more office space. This was designed by Sir Herbert Baker, an associate of Lutyens during his time in New Delhi, and was completed just before the outbreak of war in 1939. Baker's original Rotunda is the second major architectural feature of the museum, a classical design incorporating caryatids and columns that were part of Soane's earlier designs.

Housed in these two gracious halls, the collection itself is all the more impressive. Being a bank museum, there are of course a large

number of coins and bank notes as well as a history of their design and production over the years. And the unrivalled collection of forgeries makes a most enticing show and is a very example of curatorial economy.

What had for centuries been shamefully confined to the deepest of the bank's vaults is now back out on display, making a most enticing show of past generations' blunders, or possibly chutney, from their graves.

Hung on the walls of the museum are several copies of the marvellous *Dividend Day* by George Elgar Hicks exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1859 and a relatively recent addition, *The Court of Directors* in session, by Boyd and Evans.

There are also a number of architectural drawings of the Bank's various designs and extensions, topographical views of London and a fine

collection of photographs dating back to 1850. The Bank has an extensive collection of silver, many of the pieces dating from 1694, the year of the Bank's foundation and much of which is still in use for official functions. Perhaps the most important piece is a tankard presented to the first Governor, Sir John Houblon, in 1696 "in token of his great ability, industry and strict uprightness at a time of extreme difficulty".

For almost 200 years nothing was heard of this tankard until it was purchased in London by an American silversmith. Eventually in 1924, through the intervention of Benjamin Strong, then Governor of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, it was returned to the Bank.

New silver is constantly being commissioned, a recent example being the triangular salver that commemorates the Bank's 250 years in Threadneedle Street, 1734-1984. The engraving derives from an 18th-century perspective view of the Bank's new building by George Sampson, the architect.

The gold in the Bank's vaults belongs to Governments, British and foreign, and other customers. Only gold that the Bank owns is on display, among it Roman gold bars dating from AD 375 and bearing the mark of the mint at Sirmium in modern-day Bosnia.

The museum also displays archaeological finds excavated during rebuilding in 1925-39, along with a collection of statuary, and an eclectic range of artefacts including weapons and firearms once used to defend the Bank.

With two or three special exhibitions a year, no admission fee and an Aladdin's Cave of a collection that hits just the right mercenary nerve in us, it is no wonder that the Old Lady's museum attracts more than 100,000 visitors a year.



The Bank Stock Office, designed by Sir John Soane in 1793, has been reproduced

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Cold comfort
for drivers
on premiums?



Lenders act swiftly over base rate cut

Sara McConnell and Caroline Merrell on the
welcome news for millions of homeowners

Halifax Building Society was the first lending institution to drop its mortgage rate after yesterday's 0.25 percentage point cut in base rates.

However, the base rate cut is not good news for savers, as many of the societies that followed the Halifax indicated that they could be forced to cut savings rates.

The swift reaction of the Halifax angered the Nationwide, which claimed the UK's biggest society had recently said it did not see the need for any further rate cuts.

The Nationwide is already planning to cut its variable rate in April to 6.99 per cent as part of its £300 million mutually reward package.

A Nationwide spokesman said: "Only a few weeks ago the Halifax was claiming that it was unnecessary to cut rates any further." The society, the second largest, pointed out that its new deal will still undercut the Halifax, but added that it was considering whether to adjust its rates in light of the base rate move.

New borrowers with Halifax will get an interest rate of 7.25 per cent, down from 7.49 per cent — the lowest level for nearly 30 years. However, the benefits of the rate change will not be passed on to the

Halifax's 2.4 million existing borrowers until April.

Mike Blackburn, Halifax chief executive, said: "Halifax led the way with mortgage rate cuts in November and December. In the current interest rate environment, we believe our new rates are at the right level."

The cut will mean that a borrower with a £60,000 repayment mortgage will now pay £411.99 a month, a reduction of £8.50. The other lenders to follow suit include the Abbey National, Woolwich, Midland Bank and Northern Rock.

For new borrowers with the Abbey National intending to borrow more than £60,000, the rate drops to 7.24 per cent. For loans more than £100,000, the rate is 7.19, and for loans less than £60,000, the rate is 7.29. Existing borrowers will have to wait for two months to feel the benefit of the rate cut.

The Bradford & Bingley will be making a statement next week, but is expected to offer a rate of around 6.99 per cent through its branches and a rate of around 6 per cent through its direct division, Bradford & Bingley Direct, its lowest rate for 38 years.

The rate cut will add to the housing market's new-found

optimism, but will probably lead to further cuts in savers' rates. Most of the lending institutions which cut their rates this week said they were keeping savings rates under review. Lenders and estate agents claim that over the last few weeks, buyers and sellers have started to reappear on the market and are beginning to satisfy years of pent-up demand.

Both lenders and agents are reporting a surge of activity fuelled by the cheaper mortgage deals and low interest rates and are confident that this will continue.

The Halifax said that house prices had risen 0.9 per cent in February and 0.2 per cent year on year. The monthly increase was the seventh in succession and the Halifax said this "gives further support to our view that a recovery is now taking place".

The society forecasts a 2 per cent increase in prices in 1996 and a 10 per cent rise in activity. This would be enough to lift a significant number of borrowers out of negative equity. An estimated 1.5 million people have homes worth less than their mortgage.

Estate agents across Britain are seeing renewed interest from buyers and sellers. Rising house prices are expected to convince many potential buyers



Mergers at societies on the boil

After a brief shutdown, the building society rumour machine is again whirling away (Anne Ashworth writes).

This week, the Bristol & West conceded that its commitment to mutualism was not necessarily wholehearted, although the society's board remains undecided on its next step.

It is said that the Bristol & West would be most likely to merge with a larger society or bank. A similar fate, or so the gossips maintain, may also be in store for the West Bromwich Building Society, which has assets of £1.5 billion. Among those more than interested in acquiring WB, which has been dogged by controversy, is the Birmingham Midshires, the tenth-largest society, with assets of £7.7 billion.

The object of its desires said this week that it was not in talks with anyone. "We want to remain independent," it said. The society is continuing its search for a chief executive to replace Glenn Elliott, who departs next month. To date, no appointment has been made, despite the lure of a £130,000-a-year salary.

Mr Elliott's sudden resignation rekindled merger speculation. The WB says his decision was not connected with the home-income plan litigation facing the society. Legal firms, such as Barnett Sampson, are poised to issue claims on behalf of pensioners who took out WB home-income plans and have suffered losses. The society is also being pursued by the Investors' Compensation Scheme for at least £10 million it has paid to pensioner victims in part settlement of claims.

Weekend Money
is edited by
Anne Ashworth

What is on offer for N&P members

Anne Ashworth on the rewards in store
if the Abbey National deal goes through

While the future direction of other building societies remains unclear, the destiny of the National & Provincial (N&P), the seventh in size, is fixed. This week, the society's 1.4 million members received full and, in places, fearfully complex details of the £1.35 billion Abbey National takeover.

They must cast their votes by post by April 6, or in person at Manchester's Nynex arena on April 11. If they give their assent, they should get their windfall by early September, provided that the Building Societies Commission, the industry watchdog, approves.

Under the terms of the deal, qualifying investors, those who had at least £100 in share accounts at December 31, 1995, and at April 28, 1995, stand to receive £500 worth of Abbey National shares. Share accounts are those which carry

voting rights, as opposed to deposit accounts which do not make you a member of the society.

Borrowers who had at least £100 in a mortgage account at April 28, 1995 and who were with the society at December 31, 1995 should also receive the £500 worth of free shares. If you have both a loan and an account, you can receive two packages of shares.

This fixed distribution will not be available to longer-term savers, who qualify instead for the variable distribution, which will be worth about £3,500. Two-year qualifying savers, those who had at least £100 invested with the society at midnight on December 31, 1993, in the all-important

share account are entitled to receive a cash payment of £750, plus an extra payment of 7 per cent of the lower of their account balances at April 28, 1995, and at midnight on August 4, 1996. The following day, August 5, is the likely completion date for the deal (called throughout the prospectus the vesting date).

All mortgage and share accounts must be open at August 5, 1996. If you are both a two-year qualifying saver and a borrower, you are eligible for both a fixed distribution and a variable distribution. No matter how many accounts you hold, you will be entitled to only one variable or fixed interest distribution.

As in other building society

merger bonanzas, only the first-named accountholder has the right to vote, a rule laid down not by the building societies themselves but by the Building Societies Act.

This means that first-named holders get the shares. However, the prospectus points out that they should have "regard to the rights of other holders", although it does not specify how these rights should be preserved, perhaps believing this is a private matter between husbands and wives.

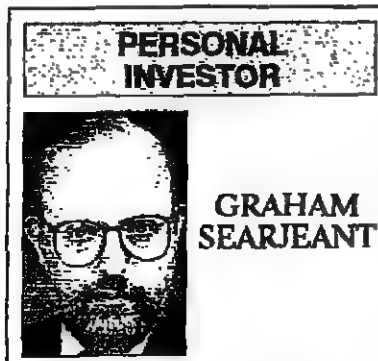
The National & Provincial's child savers may not vote and so cannot benefit from either the fixed or the variable distribution. But they will get the statutory cash bonus of some 9 per cent of the account. This will also be given to savers who are not entitled to vote because they had less than £100 in their share accounts at December 31, 1995.

A bigger boost to confidence

Quarter point cuts in short-term interest rates are now more about psychology than direct economic effects. The impact on the money supply, considered central a few years ago, is now discounted. Otherwise there would have been no cut. People who have in pay three times the base rate on their credit cards are not going to rush out and strip the high street bare. Employees in an uncertain labour market would be just as foolish to borrow for inessential purchases. Would-be homebuyers should not trade up because they can borrow a bit more at the new variable rate. Savers will not turn into spendthrifts in disgust. Companies will not change their investment decisions, or pay their bills faster.

By contrast, the psychological impact of a nice round 0 per cent base rate should be considerable. Its importance lies in convincing people who are injured to twenty years of boom and slump that the economy can continue to grow indefinitely, albeit at a modest and variable pace. Economic recovery will not automatically get out of hand, boost inflation, bring soaring interest rates and land us slap on our faces.

Homebuyers will still take some convincing that the nightmare of 15 per cent base rates and double-figure inflation can be dismissed from their calculations. After all, the Treasury and the Bank of England were only persuaded to reverse last year's rate rises because economic growth stuttered briefly to a halt. But there is plenty of reassuring evidence from other countries, notably America. Rising interest rates really can be a method of fine-tuning



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growth, as in the textbooks, not the prelude to a crunching adjustment, as in recent British economic history.

Interest rates can go down, as well as up, without a recession. This is an important message in building confidence. For nearly 3½ years now, base rates have ranged between 5 and 7 per cent. That is in no sense cheap money at today's inflation rates. Growth-mongers across Europe will want to shift the range lower to raise sluggish long-term growth rates and cut unemployment. Unless they win the day, however, the risk of unsustainable boom or slump is now much smaller. For some years ahead, British policymakers of either party will surely think it wiser to keep rebuilding confidence and rely on that to edge the sustainable growth rate higher.

The virtue of dull stability is that people can plan ahead and take decisions that have been put off. This applies both to investors and to borrowers. If building societies and banks are able to

respond to more stable conditions, it will again make sense for many people to tie their mortgages to rates of interest they can afford to pay indefinitely. For this purpose 8 per cent for ten years, the longest realistic fixed borrowing period, still looks a bit pricey. There is quite a big payment for the risk of higher inflation in that figure, inflation that might no longer be reflected in house prices. If that risk element shrinks a bit further, borrowers could stop looking over their shoulder, for fear that they will look silly if something radically cheaper became available. Envy is a poor guide to financial decisions.

Investors can afford to be more sanguine now, because that equation is better for them than for borrowers. While long-term savers should be loyal to equities, mature investors should be thinking about locking in long-term interest rates. Gilts-edged stocks with more than 15 years of life in them offer about 8½ per cent. That compares with 3½ per cent interest yield on index-linked stocks, implying a 4½ per cent payment for inflation.

If confidence in stability grows, investors should be able to pocket some of that risk premium. In America, for instance, 10-year Treasury bonds yield about 1½ points less than the near 8 per cent available on 10-year gilt-edged stocks, although yesterday's fall on Wall Street shrinks the gap. And the "real" rate of interest, as shown by the yield on index-linked stocks, might come down too. But do not look for miracle gains. They only go with high risks.

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Schroders

Paul Durman on the advantages and drawbacks of index funds

On track for a steady performance

The gods of publicity have again smiled kindly on Richard Branson and his Virgin Direct financial services offshoot.

Exactly 12 months from the launch of Virgin Direct's tracker personal equity plan (Pep), Virgin's UK index tracking fund was last week standing top of the one-year performance tables for UK growth and income unit trusts. Its 28.1 per cent growth bettered the results achieved by 136 similar funds, and far outstripped the sector's average return of 18.7 per cent.

This is a compelling contribution to the index versus active fund debate. Most of the other index trackers were also well-placed: Garmore UK Index was fourth (up 26.7 per cent), HSBC Footsie Fund was fifth (26.6 per cent), Legal & General UK Index was 31st (21.8 per cent) and Norwich Union's UK Index Tracking fund was 33rd (21.7 per cent).

Rowan Gormley, Virgin Direct's managing director, said: "For years, salesmen have earned high commissions by peddling stories of the tremendous returns generated by these strange financial wizards called fund managers."

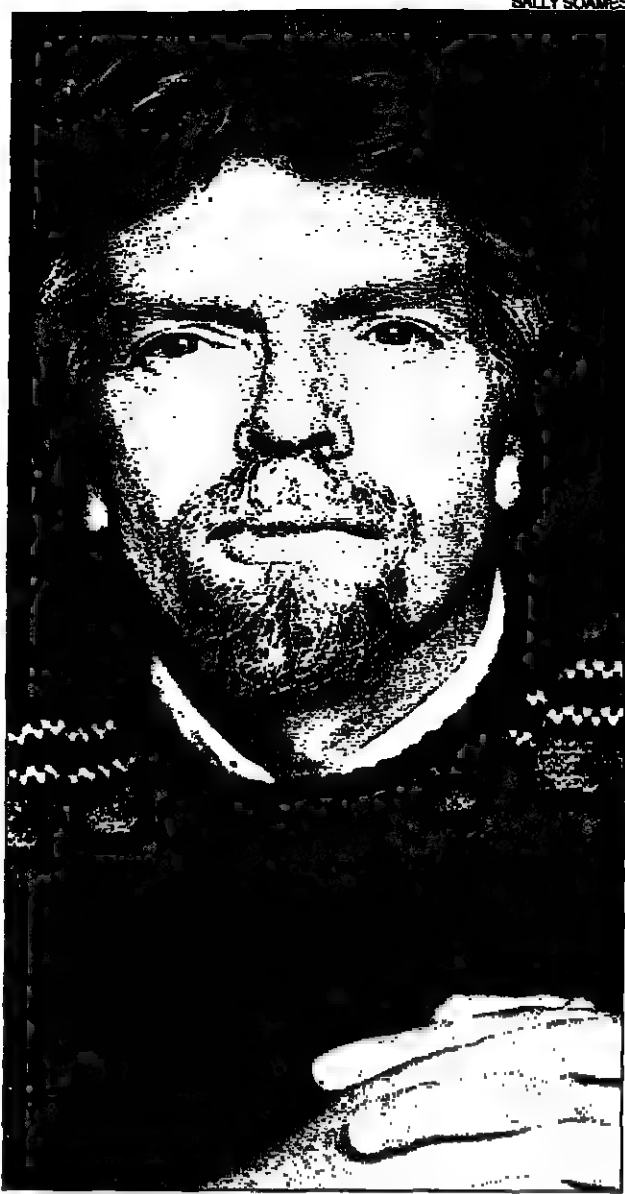
"Active fund managers have to take bets, and don't always get their bets right. But you would have thought someone would have got it right."

Tracker funds are designed to mirror the movement of a chosen stock market index, such as the FT all-share, by buying the stock of the companies that comprise the index.

The high placing of the Virgin fund reflects its low charges. When charges are stripped out, on a pure performance basis, Virgin is ranked a more modest 42nd, with HSBC 40th and Garmore 45th.

Over longer periods, the effect of charges becomes relatively less important — which means that the best-performing active funds should beat index funds. Mr Gormley said investors should challenge their fund managers. He said: "If you're holding a Pep, you should call up your fund manager and ask him if he's outperformed. If not, is he charging more than a 1 per cent annual management fee and, if so, what is he charging it for?"

Last year's strong stock market favoured index funds, since they are usually fully invested and do not, like active funds, have money sitting on deposit. The shares of large companies were particularly



Richard Branson's Virgin Direct Pep has proved popular

strong during 1995, also a benefit to the index funds.

One attraction of tracker funds is that, although they will rarely top the investment performance charts, equally, they should never be bottom. Alan Gadd, chief executive of HSBC Asset Management, another company that offers a tracker Pep, said: "Many people aren't looking for the nth degree of performance."

Some fund managers remain strongly opposed to indexing. David Mossop, chief executive of Perpetual, points out that index managers are forced to buy the shares of companies even when any

informed observer can clearly see that they are facing problems.

Mr Mossop said: "Polly Peck was a FT-SE 100 company. It was apparent that it was going bust for some time before it did so, yet all the index trackers were having to buy it."

Perpetual can boast an enviable performance record. Unfortunately, the statistics show

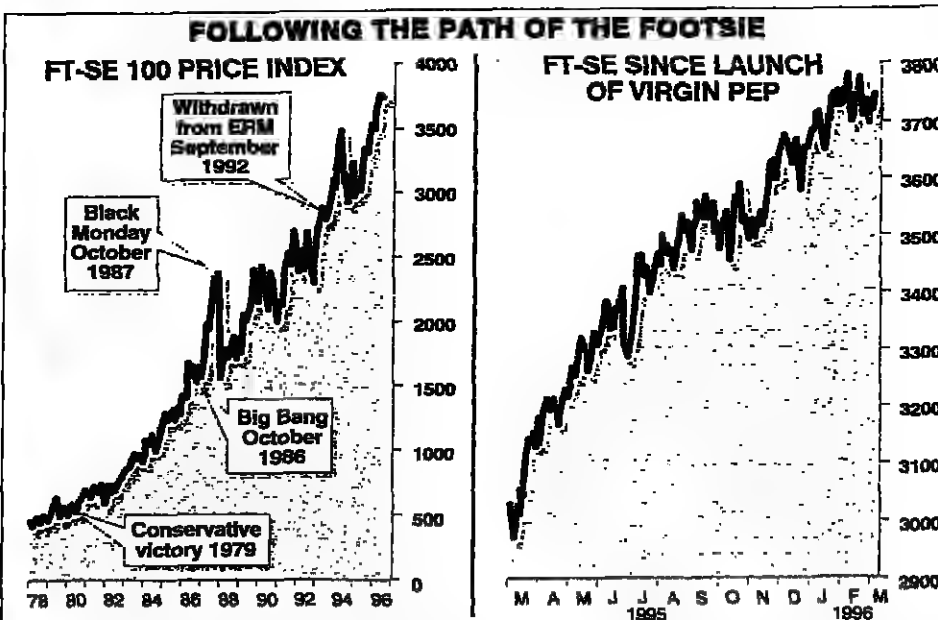
that few active managers judge investment decisions so clearly. Mr Mossop can see the attractions of index funds, particularly for those outside the financial world who are unfamiliar with the various investment companies and their reputations, and unable or unwilling to research them.

Mr Mossop said: "Index funds are a very good way for somebody who does not want to spend any time or money to do something quite cheaply. It's a bit like buying a Skoda. It will get you from A to B and it's very, very cheap — but it's hardly an Aston Martin."

Tracker Peps are not usually suitable for investors seeking income, since they typically yield little more than 3 per cent. Chris Armstrong, managing director of Norwich Union Trust Managers, said: "If a client wants income, he'd be better off with a balanced trust or a corporate bond Pep."

Norwich Union offers an index fund, but has yet to make it available through its Pep. Neil Liversidge, of DBS, the financial advisory network, is sceptical about the strength of interest in index-tracking Peps. "There's a demand at present because the market's been rising. Wait until the market's fallen heavily or been moving sideways for a long time," he said.

Tracker funds do not quite reduce the choice of Pep to a question of price. Services and understanding the needs of customers are also important. It is in this area that Virgin Direct and Direct Line believe they have most to teach the traditional financial services companies.



They just know it's better to have their savings in the stock market, and will be comfortable if their money outperforms the building society."

Virgin Direct, Direct Line and others believe that the simplicity of index funds will make Peps attractive to thousands of savers who previously shied away from stock market investments. For those who don't know their Schrodgers from their Schreibers, the only thing to understand about an index fund is that shares have traditionally produced much better returns than building society accounts.

Even leading investment houses Garmore and Fidelity, which built their reputations on the back of good performance, have made a pitch for these new investors and introduced low-cost index funds.

Fidelity's Moneybuilder Pep has no initial charge and an annual charge of only 0.5 per cent. This is half the cost of Direct Line's tracker Pep.

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Active fund managers have to take bets, and don't always get them right

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With this pension I thee split

The Government may be forced to review its stance on splitting pensions at divorce after a surprise defeat in the House of Lords last month.

The defeat concerned an amendment to the Family Law Bill, which would allow pensions to be split at the moment of divorce, rather than at retirement.

The Government is against splitting pensions in this way, but may be forced to change its mind when the Bill is discussed in the House of Commons because it cannot risk another defeat.

Under new legislation to be introduced in the middle of this year, divorcing couples will have the option of splitting their pensions as part of their divorce settlement. The new legislation, which will be laid out in the Pensions Act, means that any pension will be treated as deferred maintenance.

This new piece of legislation would replace the current arrangements whereby one spouse, usually the wife, keeps the house while the other keeps the pension.

It is aimed at curtailing the numbers of women who rely only on the State to look after them in retirement. Figures show that these numbers are growing rapidly. At present 1.5 million women depend on the State in retirement, compared with 250,000 men.

The practical details of dividing pensions at retirement have not yet been finalised.

Robin Ellison, pensions lawyer and partner in The Divorce Corporation, a company that will value the pension for those getting divorced, said that the draft guidelines under the Pensions Act are "unworkable".

He said: "The new proposals allow for the cash equivalent transfer value to be assessed on the pension member's rights. We think it should be based on the rights of the spouse of the member."

This would be a better deal for the spouse."

The Divorce Corporation this week launched a service, in conjunction with the Abbey National, that will try to provide a valuation of the pension in a non-contentious way. At present, when assessing the value of a pension in a divorce case, solicitors usually write to the pension trustees to try to find out what the transfer value of the pension rights will be.

In more complicated cases, they will get an actuarial valuation, which could cost from £800 to £1,600. If there is a dispute between husband and wife about the value of the pension, the costs of valuation could be even higher.

Rebecca Gardiner, a partner in the solicitors Kenneth Elliott and Rowe, said: "There have been a lot of problems in valuation. Nobody really knows on what basis to do it."

She says that using the transfer value method could disadvantage the spouses wishing to base their pension on that amount. Transfer values are inevitably lower than the amount in the fund.

She is encouraging those in the process of divorcing to delay it until after the introduction of the Pensions Act. She said: "Some of our advice to those people in the middle of a divorce would be to wait, especially if there are not any other available assets."

The Government is against pensions splitting at divorce because it claims it will lose out in tax revenue and it believes that couples could be encouraged to divorce because of the tax savings. Pensions splitting could mean that one spouse could drop out of the higher rate tax band and pay lower tax.

CAROLINE MERRELL

Shop around as term assurance premiums take a tumble

In Life's terms... you're worth about 8 grand less than you think, dear



Competition in the marketplace, and the receding threat of Aids as a mass killer, have sent rates on term assurance, the simplest kind of life insurance cover, tumbling. This means that there are considerable savings to be made.

Choose the right company and you can save more than £8,000 over the policy term. Legal & General, which started the price war last autumn, has just shaved more off its rates to match the latest reductions from Allied Dunbar and Scottish Widows.

Term assurance pays out only if you die within the term of the policy. Homebuyers choosing repayment loans will usually take a term policy which will repay the loan if they die. Buying the policy through the building society has meant that, in the past, borrowers did not shop around for the best-value cover.

"We are seeing an attitude change," says Patrick Bunton, of

London & Country, the mortgage broker. "In the past, customers settled with the same bank or building society for ever and a day. Now people are realising that they can look around. It's happened with motor and car insurance. It's happening with life policies."

In spite of fierce competition among insurers, the gulf between the cheapest and most expensive

term assurance remains as wide as ever. Premiums can vary from £30.52 to £58 a month on a level term assurance of £100,000 over 25 years for a 40-year-old male. Put another way, getting the wrong company could cost you £8,244 over the policy term. For a 30-year-old male, wanting £50,000 cover for 25 years, monthly premiums range from £7.45 (Legal & General) to £13.70 (Clerical Medical) — a

difference over the term of £1,875.

"Many thousands of people are still paying more than they need to for their term assurance," says Mr Bunton. "The problem is that over 60 per cent of life assurance is sold by banks, building societies or tied agents offering only one company's product. Most clients are therefore simply not getting either independent advice or a proper choice."

Since there is not an investment element, policyholders are free to cancel one policy and start another. Premiums have now dropped to the levels they were at in the late Eighties. That means that if you have taken out a policy in the past five years, you should check whether you are paying over the odds. Changing insurers will mean taking out a new policy. Check the rates by speaking to an independent financial adviser before you

cancel your current policy because developing health problems in the interim or reaching certain age thresholds can affect premiums.

"You need life insurance if somebody else will be financially worse off as result of your death. That includes a spouse, children, parents left with your debts, or even employers or employees," says Penny O'Nions, an independent financial adviser based in Amersham. "But it is a gamble. If you die during the term, the money will be paid out. If you don't die, you will get nothing back."

Always go for a policy that has fixed premiums. Some of the cheapest policies on the market are reviewed annually, and if the premiums rise each year the policy will no longer be cheap.

Insurers who review premiums include Allied Dunbar, Direct Line and Albany Life. Black Horse reviews policies every five years.

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NATIONAL SAVINGS

Unique Investment Opportunities from HM Treasury

فكرنا من الأنا

Rebates do little to avert fear of destitute old age

As the end of the 20th century approaches, a 19th-century preoccupation will once more begin to fill our minds. Grieved with a Victorian terror of a destitute old age, we will start to be anxious about our pensions.

Instead of worrying about global warming, we will be wondering whether we will be able to afford to turn up the heating to thaw our aged feet.

At present, many have yet to question whether they are saving enough for their retirement. They believe that having a pension, whatever its value, is a safeguard against a Kwik Save lifestyle in their twilight years.

Most assume that their company scheme, or personal pension, will yield a sum infinitely more generous than the basic state pension of

£58.85 a week, rising in April to £61.15. But, as we report on page 39, achieving even this low level of income requires a large lump-sum investment of £36,000.

Despite its wish to see the population accumulate more than adequate pensions, the Government is responsible for perpetuating the myth that simply having a pension suffices.

To persuade employees to leave Serps, the additional state scheme, the Department of Social Security offers a sweetener in the shape of a very modest National Insurance rebate. Unfortunately, three million of the five million who left Serps are not making extra contributions to their personal pensions, a calamitous statistic.

Next week, a new range of



COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance Editor

age-related rebates will be announced with the aim of encouraging those over 40 to stay out of Serps until their retirement. The current rebate system makes it more advantageous for the middle-aged to rejoin the scheme, despite the reductions in its benefits.

These changes present the Government with an opportunity to make clear to those leaving Serps that they must

make their own provision. Instead of dwelling on the extraordinary generosity of the rebate, they should stress that it is designed as an incentive, not a full contribution.

This is a pertinent point that ministers have always avoided in the past, in their anxiety to promote universal pensions independence, and to shrink Serps liabilities. Insurance companies sell

ing personal pensions to those who decamp from Serps should reinforce the message that extra investment is necessary, especially since as much as £1 of every £4 spent on a personal pension can disappear in insurance company charges.

Spend £50 each month on housing and you cannot expect millionaire's row. The same, unfortunately, applies to pensions.

Mutual comfort

A 0.25 percentage point cut in the mortgage rate tends to mean a 0.3 percentage point fall in savers' rates. Those depressed by this gloom rule of thumb can find some cheer in the news that societies determined to remain mutual say they will decrease their

rates by less than their competitors who are headed for the stock market.

Investment rates at the National & Provincial have been unexciting since the announcement of the takeover by the Abbey National. Investors can expect to receive even less when N&P accounts become Abbey accounts.

A small print paragraph in the 176-page prospectus, a blockbuster read, reveals that Abbey rates are "slightly lower" (and how). By way of compensation, N&P savers will have access to a "more comprehensive branch network". A strange point, given that millions of investors nowadays prefer to save by post. N&P savers will, I think, find more comfort in their free shares.

The drawbacks of cashback options

Borrowers must be aware of the tax implications, says Caroline Merrell

Mortgages that offer the borrower a large cash lump sum up front may carry an unexpected sting in the tail in the form of capital gains tax.

The possibility of buying a new home and having enough money to furnish it properly has proved an alluring combination for thousands of borrowers. Lenders, in an attempt to increase market share, now offer cashback options of up to £10,000.

The Northern Rock Building Society offers a cashback scheme of up to £9,000. It says that 1,000 people a week are registering an interest in taking out this sort of loan, especially since it began to advertise the scheme on television.

However, borrowers who wish to take advantage of the Northern Rock scheme or similar ones should be aware of the tax implications.

The Inland Revenue points out that, in some circumstances, the lump sum will be liable to capital gains tax. Paying 40 per cent capital gains tax on £9,000 would leave the borrower with a lump sum of £5,400. Taking out a cashback scheme could also push some over their own individual annual CGT exemption of £6,000.

An Inland Revenue spokesman said: "Some of the schemes are liable for capital gains tax and some of them are not." He said that the Revenue would consider each



Lenders are offering cashback options of up to £10,000

particular scheme on its own merits and liaise with the particular society. For example, National & Provincial Building Society offers a cashback scheme that has a maximum lump sum option of £7,500. The size of the cashback is based on a percentage of the advance.

Phil Reed, National & Provincial spokesman, said that the Revenue position was not entirely clear. He added: "Our feeling is that if it can be shown that it is used for the purposes of moving, then it will not be liable for the tax."

He said that those who benefit from bigger amounts of cash were more likely to have to pay capital gains tax. The society claimed that those taking a cashback should consider their individual tax

position. It said that it advised anyone taking out a scheme of possible tax implications.

The Bradford & Bingley Building Society offers a cashback scheme that will pay out a maximum of £6,000. Bradford & Bingley said that borrowers opting for its scheme should check with their tax office to find out whether they have to pay the tax.

A spokesman said that cashback schemes were decreasing in popularity. He added: "A year ago, cashbacks were at the height of their popularity. Now borrowers are more likely to opt for discounts."

Northern Rock added that it alerted borrowers to the possibility that they may have to pay tax. It added that the television advertisement did not need to carry any such warning.

The Halifax Building Society, Britain's largest lender, is poised to introduce what it calls a "service fee". Other societies prefer the term "procurement fee", while others like "marketing support fee". These are just a few of the euphemisms used to describe the commission paid to mortgage brokers by societies for placing business with them.

The fees start at about £100 and rise to £250. In some cases, the fee is in proportion to the size of the loan, usually 0.25 per cent.

However, in spite of the move towards greater disclosure of charges on all financial products and the introduction of a code of practice by the Council of Mortgage Lenders, these fees do not have to be disclosed to customers, who will inevitably have to pay them. Those who are aware of the fees can ask their mortgage adviser to disclose them. The potential pitfall in this system of remuneration

A game of the name on new fees

is that brokers could be tempted to place the business with the lender that pays the highest commission, rather than the one giving the customer the most appropriate deal.

These fees are growing in size and popularity as the squeeze on mortgage lending has meant that societies are more and more dependent on third parties, such as independent financial advisers, for business. Some of the UK's biggest societies estimate that between half and two thirds of

their mortgage business comes from third parties.

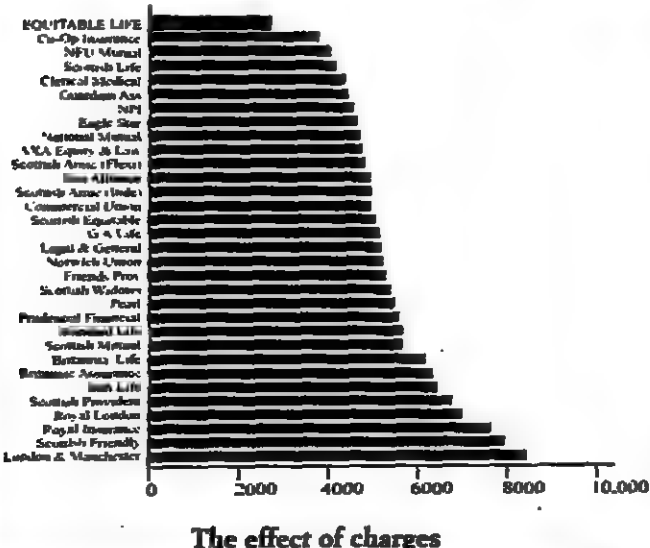
Halifax declined to say how much of its lending was introduced via this route, saying that such information was commercially sensitive. A spokesman said: "A reasonable proportion of our business is introduced. It is closely monitored, and we are going to introduce a 'service fee' programme, which will pay selected intermediaries commission depending on the amount of business they generate."

Ian Darby, marketing director of John Charcol, the mortgage broker, said that fees had grown rapidly. He added: "There are all sorts of different deals on the market. The amount will depend on any added value the broker can bring."

N&P pays "introducers" about 0.25 per cent, as does Bradford & Bingley. Alliance & Leicester pays £100, while Mortgage Trust pays £300.

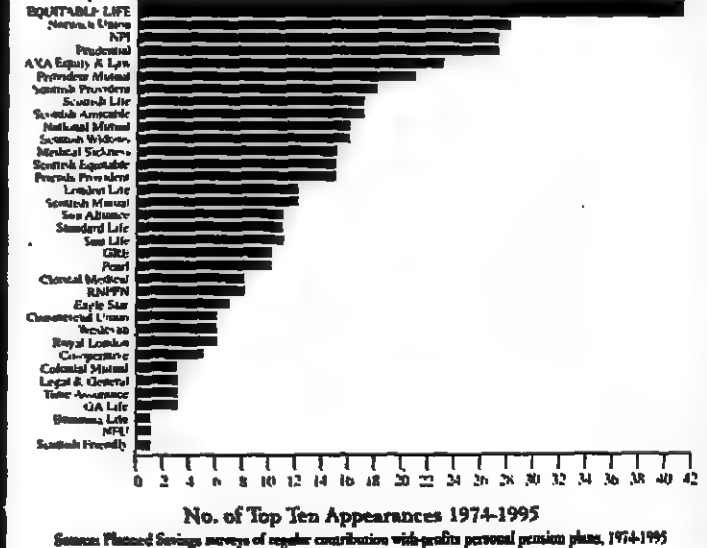
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مكتبة الأنا

Marianne Curphey examines the growth in ethical investment

WEEKEND
MONEY
GUIDE

Can you serve both God and Mammon? A report published this week pours scorn on the growing number of investment funds that call themselves "ethical". While applauding investors who want to take a moral stand on where they put their money, it condemns the trend as reflecting "frivolous fashionable causes" rather than serious ethics and says the title is often self-appointed.

Ethical funds, once dismissed as products for cranks, are becoming increasingly popular: last year there was £1 billion under investment in them, three times the figure in 1990. There are 30 ethical funds in the UK, including two investment trusts. When the first fund was established in 1984 by Charles Jacobs, the fund manager of the Methodist Church's investments, it was expected to attract only £2 million. In fact it now manages close on £500 million.

In theory, these funds enable you to invest only in companies and countries of whose politics and policies you approve. It is also possible to put together your own selection of favoured shares, although you will probably need at least £50,000 in order to achieve a balanced portfolio. Ethical funds most commonly avoid industries or companies with military connections, those which manufacture alcohol or tobacco, conduct animal experiments, pollute air or water, exploit the Third World, encourage gambling or produce nuclear power or pornography.

Those which make a positive contribution to human life — providing food, clothing, shelter, recycling facilities, waste management, renewable energy, safety and protection equipment or companies with fair wages and equal opportunities policies — are included.

However, the Social Affairs Unit's report is scornful of ethical investment because ethics is "about careful judgments on what people do with products". Dr Peter Hodgson, the Oxford physicist, a contributor, says the refusal to invest in the nuclear industry "implies [it] is totally bad, which is absurd. What about the use of nuclear radiation in medicine? Or nuclear reactors for civil power?"

Nevertheless, while the archetypal ethical investor was

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conscience
and pocket

plan. Worries about performance have in the past dissuaded some from going for the ethical option, although most ethical Peps perform reasonably well.

However, their behaviour may be more volatile than the market as a whole because they invest in smaller, newer or more politically sensitive companies.

Pat Meehan, partner in Holden Meehan, a firm of independent financial advisers specialising in ethical investments, says ethical UK trusts have made an average return of 14.94 per cent over the past 12 months — about the same as the rest of the UK growth sector of unit trusts, while internationally they have outperformed the sector by 5 per cent, at 11.6 per cent.

He says: "These funds invest in companies like Marks & Spencer, which is well known for its positive attitude towards its staff, customers and its high quality control."

Ethical funds are not the cheapest on the market. Typically their annual Pep management charge is about 1.25 to 1.5 per cent, the average for unit trust Peps.

Eiris is on 0171 735 1351; Holden Meehan's ethical investment guide is available on 01179 252874.

once said to be female, between 25 and 44, probably a teacher, doctor or social worker, possibly a Christian, even a vegetarian, ethical investment is heading for mainstream acceptance.

The Ethical Investment Research Service (Eiris) has a list of nearly 30 independent financial advisers who specialise in ethical investments. Eiris provides research both for fund managers of ethical trusts, and individuals. For just over £43, Eiris will assess the ethical credentials of an individual's portfolio of 20 shares, while for £100 it will provide a list of 100 shares which meet your specific investment criteria. The research unit also investigates the alternative investment market, companies in the all-share index and any European

or North American company. It does not hold information on Japan or the Far East at present.

Peter Webster, Eiris executive secretary, says information is collated from questionnaires, annual reports and independent research. "If we ask a company whether it has a policy of not testing cosmetics on animals, for example, and we receive no reply, we would assume it does not have a strong ethical stance on that issue."

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*Value as at 1/1/96 of £9,000 invested in the Global Advantage Trust on the same basis as a TESSA investment is £13,615. Sources: Mirocal and Moneyfacts. Unlike a bank or building society account, where your capital is secure, a PEP is invested in a unit trust and the value of trusts can go down as well as up. As a result there is no guarantee that your initial investment will be returned. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. Tax relief may be altered and the value to the investor depends upon their financial circumstances.

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Sara McConnell discovers that people developed a taste for renting during the slump

Where did all the buyers go?

Cheap mortgage money and special deals from desperate lenders have combined to cut the running costs of home loans to levels not seen since the late 1960s. At 7.25 per cent, the current standard variable rate for new borrowers (effective April 1 for existing borrowers) is at its lowest since 1968 and servicing mortgage payments needs an average of just 11.56 per cent of a first-time buyer's gross monthly income, according to the Woolwich Building Society.

With running costs for buyers at an all-time low, renting looks an expensive option. Winkworth, the London estate agent, has calculated that someone buying a house worth £115,000 would face annual running costs of £5,875 a year, including insurance and maintenance costs, while the cost of renting the same house would be £3,230 (see table).

The downside of buying is that the upfront costs are much higher than renting, but Winkworth argues that this should be partly compensated for by capital growth. Simon Agace, chairman of Winkworth, said: "You should bear in mind the compounding nature of appreciation over the years." Winkworth is expecting capital growth in central London this year of 8 per cent, much higher than the 3 per cent assumed in its figures.

But many people who could well afford to buy are still choosing to rent. Rowena Wild, director of lettings at Chestertons, says: "People are renting more than ever. People need flexibility. First-time buyers came under a lot of pressure under the Thatcher regime to be homeowners. But now the more astute person rents for a while, gives a job time to settle down. They can follow a job if they like the area."

During the property boom, anyone who could afford to do so scrambled on to the property ladder before house prices

moved beyond their reach then watched their home appreciate by the month. But rising interest rates and the resulting housing slump dealt a swingeing blow to the hopes of millions of homeowners. Those who would normally have bought had second thoughts and rented as they saw people struggling with repossession and negative equity. Rising unemployment and job insecurity made people reluctant to commit themselves to large loans. The supply of property to rent grew as homeowners who had to move but could not sell rented to cover mortgages.

The housing market is finally starting to emerge from the doldrums, but many have discovered that they like renting and letting agents are struggling to meet demand. Ms Wild said: "It is no longer a stigma to rent as it would have been five or six years ago if you said in middle-class circles that you were renting. Now you are considered astute."

Others believe there are more fundamental changes at work in the housing market, which will help to right the existing imbalance in favour of buying at the expense of renting. Many are concerned that the Government's emphasis on wider homeownership in the Eighties pushed people into buying who would have done better to rent.

Marcus Balderson, chairman of the residential lettings and management committee at the National Association of Estate Agents, says some of the continuing demand for rental property is beginning to be satisfied by individuals and companies buying property to rent out, while house prices are low and mortgages cheap. They can get a return of between 5 and 10 per cent on their investment. They are buying up some of the hastily converted and hard-to-sell studios and one-bedroom flats, helping to take some of the slack out of the bottom end of the market. But the estimated 30 per cent of rental homes owned by people wanting to sell will gradually disappear as house prices rise and they get an acceptable offer.



BUYING

You buy a house for £115,000, putting down a deposit of £15,000 and taking a mortgage of £100,000 at a rate of 7%. Assumptions are that property appreciates at 3% a year and that you could have earned 4% net on your savings if you had not used them for the deposit. Your upfront buying costs including survey, valuation and legal fees are £3,155.

Annual running costs
Cost of mortgage: £7,000 (7%)
Buildings insurance and repair/maintenance costs: £1,725
Interest foregone on deposit invested in property: £600
Total cost: £9,325
Capital appreciation @ 3% per annum: £3,450
Total annual cost: £5,875

Neither sum includes utility bills or council tax. The cost of endowment premiums for household purchases has been excluded. Source: Winkworth.

RENTING

You rent the same property worth £115,000. Your rent is £768.67 a month (calculated assuming 8% of the capital value of the property). You pay one month's rent as deposit in advance. The calculation assumes your tenancy will last a year and that your deposit is returned intact at the end of this time.

Annual running costs
Cost of renting (net): £9,200
Interest at 4% foregone on deposit during year: £30.67
Total annual cost: £9,230.67

The annual cost of buying is £3,355.67 cheaper than renting.

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Karen Zagor on protecting your property from satellites, burglars and high insurance premiums

If you are considering installing a burglar alarm system solely to reduce the payments on your home contents insurance, think again. The savings will not be sufficient to recoup the installation costs for many years, let alone the annual service charges.

There are, however, good reasons to install an electronic alarm system if you live in a high-crime area, have an unusual number of valuables or are merely concerned about security. Insurers agree that most intruders are opportunistic. A burglar on the prowl is unlikely to choose the house with the alarm system.

How much you save by installing an alarm will depend entirely on your insurer. Some now insist on burglar alarms before they offer coverage in some areas. If so, you will not get a reduced premium by fitting an alarm. For those who are not required to have alarms, the savings vary enormously. General Accident, for example, offers a 5 per cent discount. Direct Line's discount is 10 per cent, while Commercial Union gives a 15 per cent reduction.

The alarm must be approved by your insurer, or you will get no reduction in premiums. Most insurers do not give discounts for do-it-yourself alarm kits, and many specify that the installation be done by a member of the National Approval Council for Security Systems (Nacoss).

Take care over alarm

Some insurers, such as Churchill Insurance, will install a security system at no extra charge and then reduce contents premiums. Others will install a cut-price alarm system. Norwich Union charges customers £1 a week for alarm installation under its Oriole plan.

Which system you choose will depend on your needs, and the costs. Telecom Security estimates an average order is £850. That includes an external siren, strobes, passive infra-red detectors and a fire and medical option. The company monitors the alarms itself. Chubb says a basic system could be installed for £700 to £1,000, including a control panel, passive infra-red detector, personal attack buttons and outside alarm sander.

When choosing an alarm company, remember to ask

about annual maintenance charges. You may also have to pay to install an extra phone line for the system and there may be charges to change keyholders (neighbours who have your keys). Some systems only provide the alarm sander, or charge extra for a police hook-up. A small, local company may offer better deals than the big players.

If your goal is to reduce your insurance premiums, some insurers place more weight on other security measures. General Accident says customers can save up to 40 per cent by joining a neighbourhood watch scheme and passing a free home security check by one of its brokers. Commercial Union offers a 5 per cent discount for belonging to neighbourhood watch. Direct Line's discount is only 2.5 per cent, but fitting approved locks and bolts will save you 5 per cent. Many insurers also offer bonuses to customers who have not made a claim during a specified period.

If you do decide to fit your own alarm, the British Security Industry Association suggests talking to a crime prevention officer first. "I always advise people to start with their crime prevention officer. He will know what he's talking about and he's free," a spokesman said.

Nacoss, Queensgate House, 14 Cookham Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 8AJ.



Will insurance cover repairs to damage caused by an invasion from outer space?

Tin hats — and policies at the ready on Tuesday

THE chance of a Chinese satellite crashing into your home on Tuesday is far greater than the odds of winning the National Lottery. The odds of the satellite landing in Britain when it falls to Earth next week are 300-to-1. Unlike other hardware in space, the Chinese satellite is not designed to breakup on entering the Earth's atmosphere.

The good news, for homeowners who happen to be out when the satellite hits, is that many household insurance buildings and contents policies will cover any damage caused by an object from the air hitting your home. Midland Bank said buildings damage would be covered under its general "objects from the air" clause while contents would be covered under "accidental damage".

Direct Line said: "Collision with the building directly caused by any moving object

originating outside your home would be covered." General Accident said: "Strictly speaking, a satellite crashing into your home would not be covered because our policy covers aircraft and other airborne devices and a satellite or meteorite being pulled by gravity back to Earth is not airborne. But we would take a sympathetic view if something like this did happen."

Bradford & Bingley said a satellite re-entering the Earth's atmosphere would be classified as an aircraft, and damage covered accordingly. Meteorite damage, on the other hand, would not be included in standard buildings cover. Homeowners would need to extend the policy to include accidental damage.

A study conducted by MORI for Midland Bank shows almost one in three people have no home protection of any kind.

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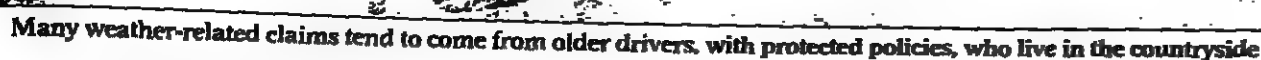
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Morag Preston asks if the cost of covering a car is about to rise

Admiral Insurance, direct car insurer at Lloyd's of London, said it is spending 10

However, not everyone in the motor industry agrees there will be an increase in premiums. According to AA Insurance, which is set to

The Association of British Insurers (ABI) reports an increase in motor accident claims compared with last year, after the winter cold spell, but says most insurance companies will have made contingencies. "An isolated case of bad weather is unlikely to increase premiums across the board." It emphasises that where premiums might rise,

Motor Advice highlights the wide range of quotes for a 30-year-old man, living in London W6, who drives a 1995 Rover 414i, with a maximum no-claims bonus. Guardian Direct quotes £192; Admiral Insurance £298; General Accident Direct £326; and Direct Line £340.

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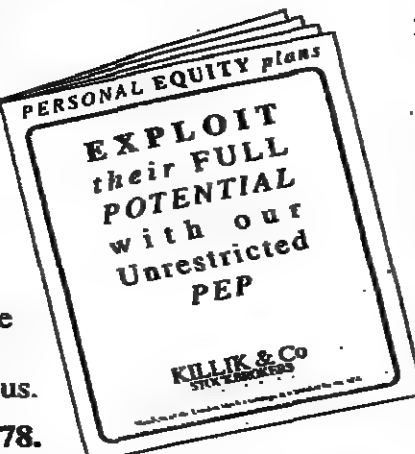
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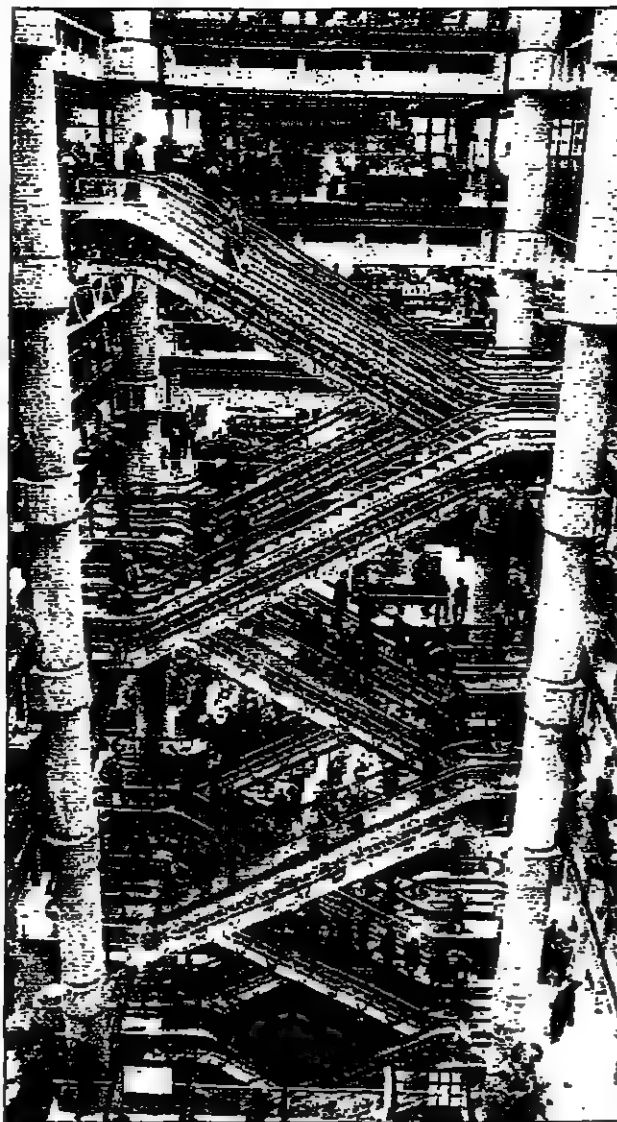
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Lloyd's has lost more than £8 billion in the past five years

Make or break time for Lloyd's of London

Names should
find out

today about

their financial

future, says

Sarah Bagnall

Today is D-day for some 34,000 names, the individuals who back the insurance market with their own capital. The postman willing, they will learn, for the first time, how much money they need to find to clear their underwriting debts and leave Lloyd's of London for good. Quite simply, it is make or break time for the 300-year-old insurance market.

Names will receive a pack that holds the key to their financial future. The pack comprises four separate statements, a 48-page guide interpreting the statements, and a covering letter from David Rowland, the chairman of Lloyd's.

What does it all mean?

Lloyd's of London has lost more than £8 billion in the past five years and thousands of names have resorted to legal action in a bid to win compensation for their losses. The prospect of years of litigation and the increasing problem of names refusing to pay their debts threatened to destroy the

insurance market. As a result, last May, Lloyd's revealed a £2.8 billion reconstruction and renewal plan aimed at resolving these problems so it can start afresh.

The plan involves an £800 million out-of-court settlement and the writing off of £2 billion worth of names' debts.

The pack, entitled *Indicative Finality Statement*, provides every name with an estimate of how much he or she will have to pay over and above any assets already held at Lloyd's to off-load existing liabilities to Equitas, a new reinsurance company.

This crucial number is at the bottom of page one under the heading "Estimated finality (cost)/surplus taking into account funds at Lloyd's". For the vast majority of names, this figure will not exceed £100,000. However, the statement is only an estimate and the final figure due out in June may vary. But for 95 per cent of names, the variation will not exceed £15,000.

The statement details the name's share of the £2.8 billion and his or her total liabilities. Problems paying the finality bill

For many names, finding the money to pay their bills poses a serious problem. There are several initiatives aimed at helping these names.

1. **Tranche 4:** Up to £150 million of the £2 billion of debt write-offs has been set aside to reduce the bills of those who cannot afford to pay. To qualify for a share of Tranche 4 cash, names must apply.

2. **Structured payment plan:** Again, names must apply.

3. **Special mortgage plan:** For many names the fact that their deposits at Lloyd's are to be exhausted raises the threat of having to sell their homes. Names have to have funds at Lloyd's to support their underwriting and, in many cases, the funds are in the form of bank guarantees secured against their homes. As a result, Lloyd's is offering a special mortgage plan for names resident in the UK, which is aimed at preventing the forced sale of homes.

Tax
The reconstruction and renewal plan has numerous and

highly complex but important tax implications. The situation for each name varies, depending on the individual's particular situation.

Action names need to take

1. Contact your financial adviser for tax advice.
2. Contact Lloyd's if you want to apply for help under Tranche 4 and it will send you Form Two, which has to be completed by April 27. The application involves a means test.

3. If you are interested in the special mortgage scheme, contact Lloyd's by the end of this month. There is also a Lloyd's helpline.

Confidentiality

Many names are concerned about providing Lloyd's with any information on their financial affairs that may be used against them if the reconstruction and renewal plan fails. Lloyd's has undertaken that the information will not be used for anything else.

Is the new scheme a once and for all solution to the problem?

That is the idea. The plan is that Lloyd's problems can be put firmly in the past and a new, clean Lloyd's can sail off into the sunset while names can, if they want, leave the market and never be faced with another bill.

In theory, the debts could revert back to names if Equitas is deemed not to have sufficient assets to meet its liabilities.

Can the reconstruction and renewal plan be rejected by the names?

Yes. Names have to vote to accept their individual offer from Lloyd's. It is not known yet what level of acceptance is required for the scheme to go ahead.

If it fails, what next?

If the plan fails, then Lloyd's will collapse. Views differ on the impact that this will have on names.

Lloyd's has given a warning that names would be ruthlessly pursued by the Department of Trade and Industry for immediate payment of their losses. There will be no chance of negotiating a gentlemanly agreement to delay part of the payment or write off part of the debt.

The opposing argument is that names would be better off because it will be too complicated for policyholders to pursue each individual name for payment of claims. This is wishful thinking rather than reality as liquidators and debt collectors are well-known for their tenacity.

Helpline: 0800 454 787.

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The size of contributions will affect your standard of living, Helen Pridham finds

Build up the retirement fund



PENSIONS GUIDE

PART
2

Pension providers never tire of pointing out that the earlier you start saving for your pension the better. But research indicates that we generally save the minimum, but expect the maximum from our pension.

Steve Bee, pensions manager at the Prudential, says: "Most people don't understand the cost of a pension. They think if they save £30 a month it is enough. To put it in context, I usually compare it to the cost of a house because to get a good pension you need a similar size of asset, say a £100,000 fund. Then I ask people what kind of house would you get for £30 a month nowadays. A good pension is more expensive than many think."

If you have a personal pension, or are a member of employer's money purchase scheme, the size of your pension fund at retirement will be the main factor determining how much pension you will receive. The sums you need to generate an adequate pension are significant. Mr Bee says: "Although most people do not think the state pension is worth much (the basic retirement pension is currently £58.85p a week), to get that much pension with your own money today from an annuity you would need to invest a lump sum of £36,000."

One way of starting to work out how much you should be saving for your retirement is to consider how much income you would need if you retired today and then find out what size of fund would be required to generate this level of income. A survey by Barclays Life found that 71 per cent of people would like more than half of their current income during retirement, while 21 per cent believed they would need 90 to 100 per cent of their current salary.

Norwich Union has produced an "underfundometer" to help people to get to grips with the sums. The retirement income you want appears next to the size of fund currently needed to provide that amount. So, if you want an

income of £10,000 you would need a fund of £94,088.90 based on Norwich Union's current annuity rates.

Unfortunately, the "underfundometer" does not tell you how much you need to save to build up the required funds. Assuming future growth of 9 per cent, for instance, a 35-year-old would need to save £74.30 a month to accumulate a fund of £100,000 by 65, while a 45-year-old would have to contribute £185.50 a month.

This does not, however, take inflation into account. As Tony Solomon, of Eagle Star, points out: "We do not actually know how much £100,000 will be worth when we retire or what interest rates will be. For example, if inflation averaged 6 per cent over the next 25 years you would need £400,000 to retain the same purchasing power."

The problem of inflation can be partly met with a personal pension by opting for a plan where your pension contributions rise gradually each year either at a given percentage, say 5 per cent, or in line with the retail price index or average earnings.

Another way of arriving at a realistic level of pension contributions is to save a fixed percentage of your earnings. This is the way company schemes work. But members of such schemes cannot afford to be complacent. Very few end up with anything like maximum benefits, which is why additional voluntary contributions should be considered.

For help in assessing your pension contributions you could ask your insurer or an independent financial adviser.

WHAT YOU NEED

The "Underfundometer" shows fund sizes required today to buy various levels of retirement income.

Income	Fund size
£5,000	£47,100.84
£7,500	£70,654.87
£10,000	£94,088.90
£12,500	£117,522.90
£15,000	£141,076.97
£17,500	£164,527.00
£20,000	£188,088.08

Source: Norwich Union



On the right tracks: the younger you start a pension, the more you are likely to receive

PAYMENTS THROUGH THE AGES

THE UNDER 35s

Contributions to a pension scheme made now are the most valuable because they have most time to grow.

Join your employer's pension scheme, if one is available. Your employer will also contribute to your pension.

If you do not have access to a company scheme, start a personal pension but make sure it can adapt to changes.

If you are an employee and do not have access to a company scheme, consider opting out of the state earnings related pension scheme — but check that you are earning enough to make this worthwhile.

THE 35 TO 55s

If you have not started a pension plan, or are not contributing, there is no time to lose. Save as much as you can. Remember, you get tax relief on your contributions.

If you have a personal pension, review your contributions. Have premiums risen in line with salary?

If you have spare lump sums make one-off single premium pension contributions.

Even if you have been a member of company pension schemes, any job changes will have impacted on your benefits. Consider additional voluntary contributions (AVCs), especially if you are considering early retirement.

THE 55s PLUS

Topping up your contributions with lump sums is still worthwhile because of the added tax relief.

With a personal pension, mop up tax relief from previous years when maximum contributions were not made. Lump sum investments can also be made in AVCs, but cannot be backdated.

HOW THE FUND CAN GROW

Age at start of plan of £100,000*	Monthly Premium	Projected Fund Size*	Premium required to build up fund
25	£25	£70,400	£33.75
	£50	£157,000	
35	£25	£28,100	£74.30
	£50	£59,100	
45	£25	£11,300	£185.50
	£50	£23,100	
55	£25	£3,550	£291.50
	£50	£7,810	

Source: Norwich Union *Assumes investment growth of 9% and retirement age of 65

CGT ALLOWANCES — JANUARY 1996

The indexed rise for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in January 1996

Month purchased	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
January	-	0.818	0.730	0.647	0.561	0.502	0.484
February	-	0.810	0.722	0.634	0.555	0.496	0.448
March	-	0.801	0.717	0.619	0.553	0.493	0.443
April	-	0.853	0.788	0.694	0.598	0.478	0.480
May	-	0.840	0.775	0.688	0.578	0.535	0.474
June	-	0.836	0.770	0.684	0.574	0.538	0.474
July	-	0.834	0.761	0.688	0.577	0.540	0.476
August	-	0.834	0.763	0.670	0.573	0.535	0.471
September	-	0.836	0.745	0.667	0.574	0.528	0.467
October	-	0.828	0.739	0.667	0.571	0.529	0.460
November	-	0.817	0.733	0.651	0.558	0.513	0.453
December	-	0.820	0.729	0.653	0.554	0.508	0.454
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	
January	0.353	0.257	0.164	0.108	0.089	0.063	0.029
February	0.343	0.250	0.147	0.102	0.082	0.057	0.022
March	0.337	0.237	0.143	0.099	0.078	0.054	0.018
April	0.314	0.201	0.128	0.082	0.068	0.042	0.008
May	0.306	0.190	0.125	0.078	0.064	0.038	0.004
June	0.302	0.185	0.120	0.078	0.065	0.038	0.003
July	0.300	0.186	0.123	0.082	0.068	0.043	0.007
August	0.297	0.178	0.120	0.081	0.065	0.038	0.002
September	0.289	0.162	0.116	0.077	0.068	0.036	-
October	0.278	0.153	0.112	0.074	0.059	0.034	0.003
November	0.268	0.155	0.108	0.075	0.061	0.034	0.003
December	0.264	0.156	0.107	0.078	0.058	0.028	-

The 10 month for disposals by individuals on or after April 6, 1985 (April 1, 1985 for companies) is the month in which the allowable expenditure was incurred, or March 1982 where the expenditure was incurred before that month.

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German able to relax as early spotlight falls on championship rivals

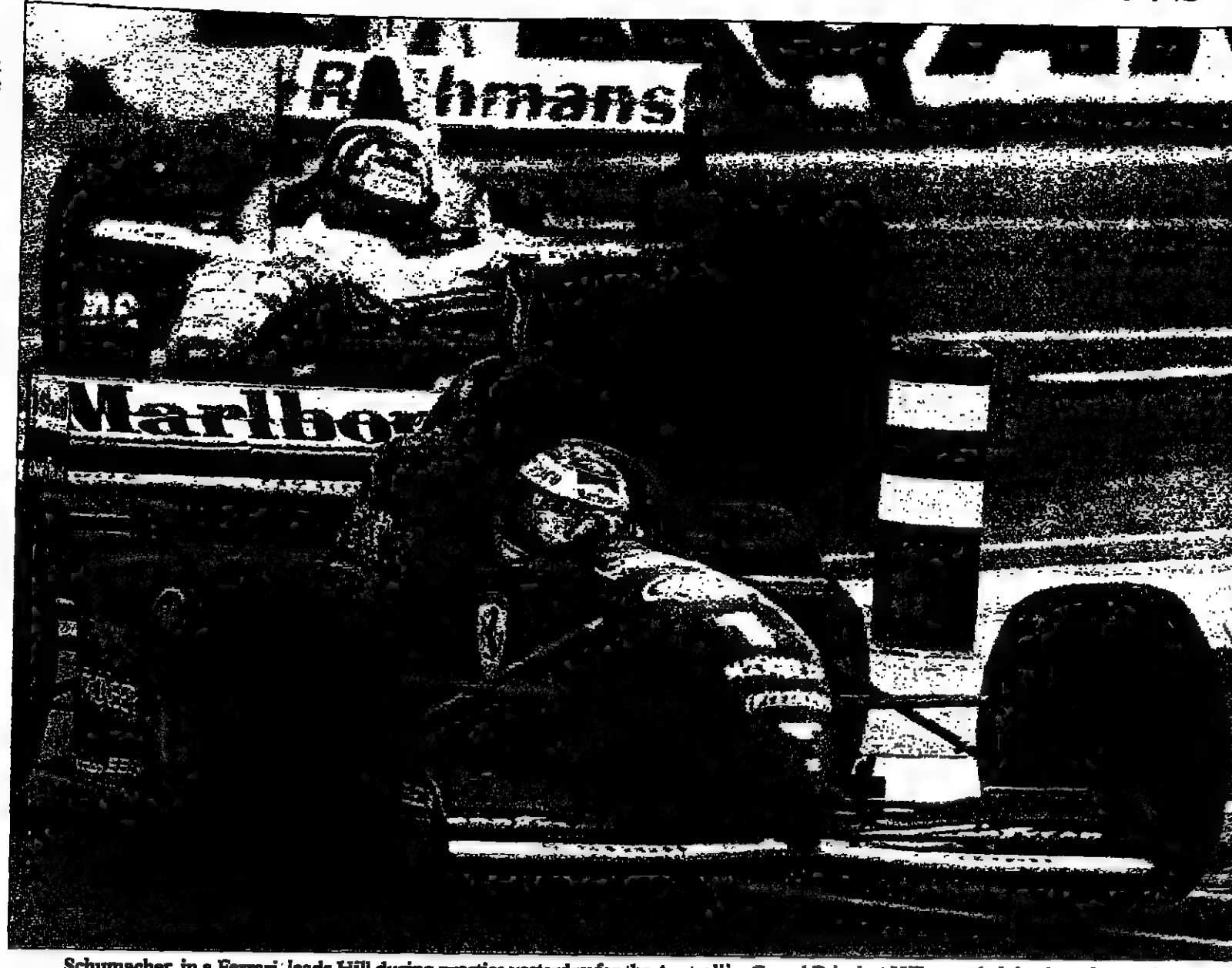
Schumacher shines in the shadows

FROM OLIVER HOYT
IN MELBOURNE

MICHAEL SCHUMACHER was in a jovial mood here yesterday. He joked with Gerhard Berger, smiled broadly when Jacques Villeneuve said how pleasantly surprised he was that not all Formula One drivers were robots and then hitched a lift on the back of a forklift truck in the pit-lane. He is usually a stranger to such levity.

After all Ferrari's pre-season problems, the delays, the engine blow-ups and the technical problems, Schumacher's happy countenance betrayed the fact that the final stages of the team's build-up to the Australian grand prix tomorrow have not quite been the apocalypse everyone was suggesting. That realisation seems to have lifted a weight from his shoulders.

The young German looks like a beacon now when he walks through the paddock, resplendent in his bright red



Schumacher, in a Ferrari, leads Hill during practice yesterday for the Australian Grand Prix, but Hill recorded the day's fastest time

CAR 96

A full guide to the grand prix season appears in Car 96 today, with tomorrow's race preview in detail by Jonathan Palmer, the BBC commentator and ex-Formula One driver. There is also a chance to enter a great new grand prix competition, with prizes worth thousands of pounds to be won.

uniform. That apart, though, he has attained a measure of welcome anonymity. Everyone loves a winner and they have got Damon Hill and Villeneuve marked down as this weekend's possible victors. The Williams duo are mobbed by a crush of photographers and journalists outside their garage, but, at Ferrari, it is all quiet.

Hill and Villeneuve still have a clear advantage in their Williams-Renaults. They are better prepared than the rest, swapping the lead at the top of the list of times during the early practice sessions, but they can already hear the approaching thunder of the hooves of the Prancing Horse.

After a negligible amount of testing in this year's car, Schumacher found himself less than a second off the pace set by Hill in the final session yesterday, close behind Villeneuve and Jean Alesi, in a Benetton-Renault. His teammate, Eddie Irvine, was seventh quickest, but still very much in touch. If this is Ferrari at their least prepared, they are not in bad shape.

There is still the issue of reliability, of course, and they may suffer for their lack of testing miles during the race, but their early competitiveness prompted Schumacher to think for a few seconds before caution got the better of him and he denied again he had any chance of winning the

drivers' title for a third year in succession.

"If we had a lot of luck, then maybe we could dream about that," Schumacher said, "but I am not a dreamer. I am a realistic person. We have done

hardly any miles and we are not quite on the pace. I can't really change my mind about the championship because we cannot expect to solve all our problems in a couple of months.

Irvine said the atmosphere in the team's garage was "stressed" as they tried desperately to make up for lost time. "You would not believe how much work we have to do," he said, "but we have got to be encouraged by the fact that we are so close to the rest. It does not look too bad."

After Villeneuve, who scurries around the paddock looking like Hill's kid brother on a day-trip, had set the quickest time on Thursday, Hill put

him in his place yesterday, producing a blistering lap close to the end of the afternoon session and boosting his confidence for the one qualifying session today.

"The pace is definitely hotting up now," he said. "Everyone is getting to explore the circuit in a bit more depth, so it is getting quite exciting."

"Jacques has adapted very well to Formula One and it is obvious he is going to be a real title contender. I have had some pretty good teammates already, though, so that is nothing new. It is going to be a very close, competitive season. We have a slight advantage now, but things are going to get much tighter."

Britain signs pact to improve standards

THE Olympic governing bodies of Great Britain and Australia yesterday signed an agreement to promote greater co-operation in physical fitness and sport. The pact, called a "memorandum of understanding", governs a two-way exchange of information on coaching, medicine, science and other technical matters relating to high performance in sport.

It was signed in London by the British Olympic Association chairman, Craig Reddie, and John Coates, the president of the Australian Olympic Committee. "This agreement is designed to promote the spirit and ethics of the Olympic movement," Reddie said afterwards. "Our goal is to achieve sporting excellence for both our countries and give more men and women the opportunity to develop their skills."

Rowlands celebrates

BOWLS: Wales avoided the wooden spoon in the home international indoor bowls series at Auckland yesterday, surviving a shaky start to beat Ireland 132-102, winning on five of the six rinks. It was reason to celebrate for Phil Rowlands, of Cardiff, who this week became the third generation of the Rowlands family to captain his country, following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Tom, and father, Keith. Last night, Scotland, the holders, seemed to have the title sewn up when they led England 112-79 with only 21 ends left to play.

Giles returns to action

HOCKEY: Calum Giles returns to hockey today, after recovering from a hernia operation, as a substitute to Havant's second team and, if all goes well, he could be on the bench for tomorrow's national league first division match against Teddington. Teddington need to win to be free of relegation worries. Southgate play East Grinstead while, Cannock, their rivals for the championship, visit Hounslow.

Blue boats on Thames

ROWING: The Oxford University Boat Race crew will lead off the 106 eights in the Reading Head of the River today and are clear favourites to retain their title. They will be followed by a Leander crew stroked by Mark Partridge, a lightweight international. Cambridge will be in action further down the river, on the Boat Race course, involved in races with Imperial College, who were marginally faster than Oxford in meetings a month ago.

A close run thing

ATHLETICS: At least three leading members of the Great Britain senior squad for the world cross country championships in South Africa on March 23 will compete in the English national championships in Newark today. Andrew Pearson, Chris Sweeney and Alison Wyeth will run against the advice of David Clarke, the British men's team manager, who feels it is too close to the world championships.

Hazell wins for Kent

BOWLS: Sandy Hazell, of the Mote Park club, Maidstone, won the English women's national indoor singles championship yesterday, beating Jean Baker, of South Forest, Nottinghamshire, 21-8 at Banister Park, Eastleigh. Hazell took a 7-0 lead and, with Baker unable to find a consistent range, the Kent bowler left her opponent trailing with a scoring burst of 3-3-2 in mid-match.

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated
* denotes all-league match

FA Cup

Fifth-round replay

(1) Tottenham v Nottingham Forest

Second round

(1) Chelsea v Wimbledon

FA Carling Premiership

(1) Aston Villa v Queens Park Rangers

(2) West Ham v Middlesbrough

(3) Newcastle v Liverpool

(4) Arsenal v Tottenham

(5) Manchester United v Blackburn

(6) Chelsea v Wimbledon

(7) Manchester City v Southampton

(8) Liverpool v Arsenal

(9) Tottenham v Manchester United

(10) Chelsea v Wimbledon

(11) Manchester City v Southampton

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(40) Liverpool v Arsenal

(41) Tottenham v Manchester United

(42) Chelsea v Wimbledon

(43) Manchester City v Southampton

Second division

(1) Blackpool v Notts County

(2) Brentford v Wrexham

(3) Bristol City v Burnley

(4) Wrexham v Burnley

(5) Burnley v Wrexham

(6) Wrexham v Burnley

(7) Burnley v Wrexham

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(46) Wrexham v Burnley

(47) Burnley v Wrexham

(48) Wrexham v Burnley

(49) Burnley v Wrexham

(50) Wrexham v Burnley

Third division

(1) Barnet v Chester

(2) Cambridge Utd v Plymouth

(3) Colchester v Bury

(4) Bury v Colchester

(5) Colchester v Bury

(6) Bury v Colchester

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(44) Bury v Colchester

(45) Colchester v Bury

(46) Bury v Colchester

(47) Colchester v Bury

(48) Bury v Colchester

(49) Colchester v Bury

(50) Bury v Colchester

Fourth division

(1) Gillingham v Exeter

(2) Exeter v Gillingham

(3) Gillingham v Exeter

(4) Exeter v Gillingham

(5) Gillingham v Exeter

(6) Exeter v Gillingham

(7) Gillingham v Exeter

(8) Exeter v Gillingham

(9) Gillingham v Exeter

(10) Exeter v Gillingham

(11) Gillingham v Exeter

(12) Exeter v Gillingham

(13) Gillingham v Exeter

(14) Exeter v Gillingham

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(16) Exeter v Gillingham

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(39) Gillingham v Exeter

(40) Exeter v Gillingham

(41) Gillingham v Exeter

(42) Exeter v Gillingham

(43) Gillingham v Exeter

(44) Exeter v Gillingham

(45) Gillingham v Exeter

(46) Exeter v Gillingham

(47) Gillingham v Exeter

(48) Exeter v Gillingham

(49) Gillingham v Exeter

(50) Exeter v Gillingham

Fifth division

(1) Dagenham v Dulwich

(2) Dulwich v Dagenham

(3) Dagenham v Dulwich

(4) Dulwich v Dagenham

(5) Dagenham v Dulwich

(6) Dulwich v Dagenham

(7) Dagenham v Dulwich

(8) Dulwich v Dagenham

Chief's Song in tune for Sandown test

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

THE Sunderlands Imperial Cup traditionally supplies the final piece of the Cheltenham jigsaw and today's renewal at Sandown offers punters an excellent chance of topping up their Festival betting banks. During the past 11 years three winners of the two-mile handicap hurdle — Floyd, Moody Man and Olympian — have gone on to win at Cheltenham and Chief's Song looks to have a bet-inducing chance of completing the first leg of the double.

Simon Dow has always held his six-year-old in high regard and had Alderbrook fall on the way in the run-up to Cheltenham the Epsom train-

RICHARD EVANS

NAME: CHIEF'S SONG
(4.05 Sandown Park)
Next best: Fessan
(1.45 Ayr)

er would have seriously considered running Chief's Song in the Champion Hurdle. Best on good ground over a stiff two miles, he opened his account for the season at Cheltenham in November when defeating Butty Road and Backgammon. Eleven days later he followed up under Richard Dunwoody when beating Eskimo Nel a short head in the William Hill Hurdle over today's course and distance.

Against 21 rivals, he displayed considerable gameness that day in a higher standard of race than this afternoon's. Although he subsequently disappointed in The Ladbrokes, the soft ground at Leopardstown and an interrupted preparation were to blame.

There have been no hitches in the run-up to today and with Dunwoody booked to



Norman Conqueror, carrying the colours of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, wins the Horse and Hound Grand Military Gold Cup at Sandown yesterday

ride, Dow is exuding quiet confidence. "The preparation has gone very smoothly and he's fit and well. He did his last piece of work on Tuesday and has a lot going for him in the race," he said yesterday. Silver Groom has been the subject of considerable attention support during the week. Reg Akehurst's runner will also appreciate the better ground but he is not the most fluent hurdler. At Ascot last year he was beaten eight lengths by Chief's Song and is only 1lb better off. Eskimo Nel was involved in a ding-dong battle with his selection at Sandown but is only 1lb better

off and suffered a bad fall in the Tote Gold Trophy. The Imperial Cup is often won by a lightly raced hurdler towards the foot of the handicap and Tennessee King is an interesting outsider. A winner at Ludlow last season, he subsequently split Non Vintage and Mack The Knife and is more than two stone better off with Non Vintage here. Away from the television cameras, Dark Stranger could offer some value when making his chasing debut in the Langibaby Novices' Chase at Cheltenham (2.30). A winner on the Flat in France two years ago, Charlie Brooks's recruit

confirmed the promise shown on his hurdling debut when winning at Haydock 15 days ago. He is reported to have schooled well over fences at home and, as a five-year-old, is particularly well treated at the weights. Bell's Life is due a change of luck, more than any other horse in training, having been forced out when in contention at Uttoxeter last month before being brought down at Newbury eight days ago when placed by the front-running James The First, Philip Hobbs's well-handicapped charge should go well.

BOOKMAKERS yesterday suspended betting on the Guinness Arkle Trophy Chase at Cheltenham next Tuesday in the face of considerable doubts about the participation of Draborgie, the 2-1 favourite, trained by Martin Pipe (Julian Muscat writes). Pipe was non-committal about the mare's prospects of making the line-up and unusual betting patterns prompted William Hill to draw stamps. "The alarm

bells started ringing when punters wanted to cancel their bets on Draborgie and there was money for the next three in the betting," David Hood, the firm's racecourse representative, said. In other Cheltenham Festival news, Jason Titley is likely to take the ride on the outsider Squire Silk, trained by Andy Tunnell, in the Smurfit Champion Hurdle, also on Tuesday. Paul Carberry, Squire Silk's regular rider, misses the mount because of suspension.

Draborgie doubt

General Rusty to shine after lengthy absence

CHEPSTOW
BBC1
1.00: Silver Standard, from an in-form stable, makes most appeal against some out-of-form opponents. The mare is more effective at longer trips but may overcome that handicap in this company. Selatan has claims if, as seems likely, David Gandolfo's horse improves for tackling 2½ miles for the first time. He stayed well on the Flat.
1.30: This should concern the top three in the handicap, with King Lear narrowly preferred to Sister Stephanie and Major Bell. King Lear would almost certainly be Cheltenham-bound but for his tendency to make mistakes. He blundered away a

winning chance last time but is worth support on his favoured surface here. Major Bell boasts two narrow victories in as many starts over fences but looks a shade high in the weights. Sister Stephanie, another prone to jumping errors, has the most scope and rates a bigger danger.
2.00: Backgammon may finally have got his act together and two recent victories should have lifted his confidence. Teinelt's two victories have come in handicaps, for which he qualified after a series of placed efforts in novice company. He has place prospects. Lake Kariba probably failed to stay here last time, and merits respect back over this shorter trip.

JULIAN MUSCAT
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tingham and Fakenham and this stiffer track should bring about further improvement. The front-running Norcathin has claims on his best form, but disappointed at Fakenham last time. Bone Setter bounced decent hurdles form at the start of this season and is one of the short list, but Stan Mellor's gelding's last four runs have been over fences and he has not raced for 96 days. Kelly Mac is not badly handicapped, but is probably best on a sharper track.

3.30: Senior El Beiruti is marginally preferred to Spanish Light. The slight worry is today's distance as Susan Keston's impressive novice has been showing his best form over half-a-mile further, but the front-running seven-year-old has plenty of pace and has been running in better class races than his rivals.
Spanish Light won over three miles earlier this term but is almost certainly better over shorter trips and ran out an easy winner from Fifty-sevendennels over today's trip on soft ground at Haydock two weeks ago. Lord Dorset was travelling well when unseating his rider four out at Wetherby last time, but has more to do here.

4.05: See above.
4.40: Arthur's Minstrel jumped better than usual when winning over course and distance three weeks ago and should confirm the form with second-placed Cuddy Dale in spite of a 2lb swing in the weights for three-quarters of a length.
However, in a race which looks tricky, General Rusty gets the narrow vote despite not having raced for 147 days. Charlie Mann's chaser still holds a Cheltenham Gold Cup entry which shows the high regard in which the progressive eight-year-old is held. He jumps boldly and stays well.
King Credo, formerly a useful hurdler, has never really taken to the larger obstacles and preference is for Gilpa Valu. Jenny Pinnar's gelding can be forgiven his latest effort when pulled up at Wincanton, as he ruined his chance with a bad early blunder.

RICHARD EVANS

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Sandown Park

Going: good.
1.00: 1. Hm Of Pines (J. McCarthy, 9-1), 2. Zephyrus (G-1), 3. Infected (14-1), 4. Crown Equity (13-1), 5. 10-1, 6. 10-1, 7. 10-1, 8. 10-1, 9. 10-1, 10. 10-1, 11. 10-1, 12. 10-1, 13. 10-1, 14. 10-1, 15. 10-1, 16. 10-1, 17. 10-1, 18. 10-1, 19. 10-1, 20. 10-1, 21. 10-1, 22. 10-1, 23. 10-1, 24. 10-1, 25. 10-1, 26. 10-1, 27. 10-1, 28. 10-1, 29. 10-1, 30. 10-1, 31. 10-1, 32. 10-1, 33. 10-1, 34. 10-1, 35. 10-1, 36. 10-1, 37. 10-1, 38. 10-1, 39. 10-1, 40. 10-1, 41. 10-1, 42. 10-1, 43. 10-1, 44. 10-1, 45. 10-1, 46. 10-1, 47. 10-1, 48. 10-1, 49. 10-1, 50. 10-1, 51. 10-1, 52. 10-1, 53. 10-1, 54. 10-1, 55. 10-1, 56. 10-1, 57. 10-1, 58. 10-1, 59. 10-1, 60. 10-1, 61. 10-1, 62. 10-1, 63. 10-1, 64. 10-1, 65. 10-1, 66. 10-1, 67. 10-1, 68. 10-1, 69. 10-1, 70. 10-1, 71. 10-1, 72. 10-1, 73. 10-1, 74. 10-1, 75. 10-1, 76. 10-1, 77. 10-1, 78. 10-1, 79. 10-1, 80. 10-1, 81. 10-1, 82. 10-1, 83. 10-1, 84. 10-1, 85. 10-1, 86. 10-1, 87. 10-1, 88. 10-1, 89. 10-1, 90. 10-1, 91. 10-1, 92. 10-1, 93. 10-1, 94. 10-1, 95. 10-1, 96. 10-1, 97. 10-1, 98. 10-1, 99. 10-1, 100. 10-1, 101. 10-1, 102. 10-1, 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Saturday portrait: Dennis Wise, by Russell Kempson

Streetwise urchin who can enrich England's quest for respectability

In October 1994, Dennis Wise hailed a cab and almost waved goodbye to his career. He had spent an evening discussing business with Eric Hall, his agent, at Scribes West, the Kensington watering hole owned by Terry Venables, the England coach. When he left, with his girlfriend, Geraldine Lennon, he had an argument with Gerald Graham, 65, the taxi driver who had refused to take him where he wanted to go. Words were exchanged, Graham was confronted and a glass partition in the cab was broken.

Wise, the Jack-the-lad England and Chelsea midfielder player, who will captain his side against Wimbledon, his former club, in an FA Cup quarter-final at Stamford Bridge this afternoon, had overstepped the mark once too often. His impish, impulsive character had got him into trouble. Again.

This time, though, it was not the Football Association and its often haphazard disciplinary system that he would stand before. This was serious, a situation that, for once, no amount of mischievous grins could diffuse.

In February last year, Wise was convicted of assault and causing criminal damage. In March, he was sentenced to three months in prison. However, after spending two hours in a cell, he was released on bail pending an appeal. "It was long enough to know what it's like to lose your freedom," he said later.

In June, he was acquitted, apparently grudgingly. Judge Gerald Butler QC, sitting with two magistrates, told him that their decision had been made "with no enthusiasm". He said that Wise, by his own admission, had behaved in a disgraceful fashion but that the evidence of Graham could not be relied upon "beyond reasonable doubt".

Wise, predictably, expressed remorse and relief. Hall was "monster, monster happy" and the cosy, self-protective world of football quietly got on with business. Case closed. It was, after all, unrelated

to matters on the pitch. "Times like that help you appreciate life as well as football," Wise said. "It was a time for sitting down and slowing down, to think about yourself and where you want to go. I know I could have messed it all up and nobody wants to get to the end of their career and have to face up to something like that. I've learnt from it and it's a good thing I have."

Incident, embarrassment, humility, recurring themes for the sparky son of a west London publican, Dennis Sr, and his wife, Pam. A 5ft 6in, 10st bundle of energy, living on his nerves and wit. A streetwise urchin, knowing what he wants, when he wants it and how he can get it. And always that innocent, little-boy-lost smile, swiftly disarming the fiercest critic

'When you want to win so badly, as he does, you sometimes cross the line'

or angriest opponent. When Southampton offered him a contract at the end of his £25-a-week apprenticeship — an opportunity most aspiring professionals would accept with gratitude — he turned it down. Lawrie McMenemy, the Southampton manager at the time, ran out of patience and showed him the door. "I wasn't treated very well," the young upstart reflected.

Next stop Wimbledon, the Crazy Gang and all their laddish, jocular bravado and bizarre male bonding rituals — hiding the manager's bed in a hotel lift, playing American football in training the day before a league game.

"He was an infectious, lively lad, full of enthusiasm," Dave Bassett, then the Wimbledon manager, said. "He was like one of those annoying flies you want to swat. In one of his first games for us, when

we beat Sheffield United 5-0, he got involved with Ken McNaught, who kicked him and got sent off. Peter Withe also got the hump, chucked the ball at him and got sent off. Then, in the last minute, he missed a penalty. Typical Dennis, always in the thick of it."

Bassett happily endured the numerous wage demands and transfer requests, the petulant outbursts and off-the-field scrapes, the rough with the smooth — as did Bobby Gould, his successor. In September 1988, Wise was fined £150 after he had indulged in a spot of illegal panel-beating on the door of a fellow motorist's car. In May 1990, he was fined £200 and banned from driving for a year after he had refused to provide a breath specimen when stopped by police.

Yet, off road, Wise's spiky effervescence, scurrying endeavours and clench-fisted inspiration easily counter-acted his short-fused temperament. They brought him success, too, with an FA Cup-winner's medal in 1988, a first international call-up, in Bobby Robson's England squad for the Rous Trophy, and, eventually, a £1.6 million move to Chelsea. "When I left, it was an emotional moment," he said.

However, Stamford Bridge was and, six years on, still is his spiritual home. The lads who roll in from the King's Road hostels at 2.50pm on a Saturday, to sit where The Shed once stood, can comfortably identify with their 29-year-old idol: his Cockney patter, his liking for pie and mash, Mr Bean and Dirty Den, and his contractual commitment to Chelsea until at least 1998.

They even forgave the V-sign he offered them during the heat of battle four years ago. "I was wrong, I shouldn't have done it," he said.

In his favoured Armani suit and sipping lemonade and lime, he mixes equally easily with the smart set at the Bridge. Status has demanded his progression from Volkswagen Golf to Mercedes to Range Rover and the purchase of a



ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE HARRIS

luxury home in Buckinghamshire, and with the omnipresent Hall at his shoulder — "We're like brothers, monster brothers" he is never short of a favour or invitation. "Dennis is a real terrier, a players' player," Dean Holdsworth, the Wimbledon striker, said. "Whatever happens, he always seems to be enjoying himself. Let's face it, anyone who has been

at our club has always got the pranks in him. He's as consistent as anyone and when you want to win so badly, as he does, you sometimes cross the line. But you don't captain the likes of Roud Gullit and Mark Hughes without having some great qualities." Should Holdsworth receive a playful nip on the ankles this afternoon, he may revise his reference. Wise's act will never be squeaky

clean — he has been booked seven times this season — but he has recovered from a lengthy injury lay-off early last year, which was caused by a torn thigh muscle, and his vibrant form alongside Gullit has captivated many a strewed judge. An odd couple, maybe — dreadlocks and crew-cut, little and large, chalk and cheese — but it works, increasingly impressively.

"It's the most enjoyable spell of my career," Wise said. Enough, perhaps, for Venables to embrace again his cheeky chappy, to add to his total of 11 caps, to include him in his squad for the European championship this summer and to tell him to go out there and give 'em hell. "And by the way, Den, I don't want you anywhere near my club. Understand?"

Why Atherton should remember

"KNOW your enemy," is written on the heart of every general leading his men into battle. It should be true, too, of every sports captain. A pity, then, that Michael Atherton should have said this week that he knows little about the Sri Lanka players confronting him today.

Atherton's first taste of international cricket, and one of his earliest forays into captaincy, was on an England youth tour of Sri Lanka in 1987. Atherton's side would have won the final "Test" match in Galle and with it the series had it not been for a swash-buckling innings from a 17-year-old wicketkeeper.

This diminutive dasher was none other than Romesh Kaluwitharana, the man who has set alight the World Cup with his brilliantly destructive opening partnerships with Sanath Jayasuriya. Kalu-

witharana, who shares a birthday with that other famous opener, Ian Botham, struck a century in 134 minutes and 84 of his 119 runs came in boundaries.

Atherton's memory lapse did little for the chances of Captain Grumpy smiling during the match today. Sporting Index, the spread-betting firm, estimated that he would do so only once or twice.

Missing needle
More harsh words about the playing structure of this World Cup. "The qualifying rounds did not have the necessary needle," Ali Bacher, the managing director of the South Africa cricket board, said yesterday. "The top teams knew that they could afford to lose three games and still get into the quarter-finals." Bacher is to propose that fewer

Simon Wilde's WORLD CUP EXTRAS

teams progress to the knock-out stages when the competition is held in England in 1999, but said that he also wants more smaller nations taking part when South Africa and Zimbabwe stage the event in 2003.

"I don't think there has been significant growth in the game at the top echelon. World cricket is not growing," said the man who may one day run world cricket. "All that is happening is that the major countries are playing more matches against each other."

Health warning

A leading Islamabad cardiologist advised heart patients not to watch television coverage of Pakistan's match with India today. The match could have fatal consequences for some, Nasir Mohtai warned. "The anxiety gets the better of human arteries," he said.

India's players know this well, especially when they are at home to their fiercest rivals. Of the last seven matches, dating back to 1987, India have won only one and that was by virtue of losing fewer wickets when the scores finished level. Nor should they have won that one. When Kapil Dev delivered the final ball, three instead of four fielders were inside the "circle", but the Indian umpire failed to call no-ball, denying Pakistan victory.

McGovern inspires as Romford rise again

Non-League Football By WALTER GARDNER

WHEN Bradley Goodwin took over as chairman of Romford four days before the start of the season, the club had "just one player and a debt of £17". With two months to go, Romford sit on top of the Essex Senior League, six points clear with two matches in hand, have reached the League Cup final, against Burnham Ramblers at Brentwood on April 20, and are still in the Essex Premier Cup and London Floodlit Cup. They have also cleared their debt.

A fifth piece of silverware, the Wembley Challenge Cup, that Romford are pursuing marks the delight that a famous former amateur club are back in business at all. The Challenge Cup, in which Romford hold a 1-0 first-leg lead, is played against Bromley, to whom they lost before 95,000 people in the first FA Amateur Cup final to be held at Wembley in 1949.

Romford, then in the Southern League, folded after selling their ground in 1978 and were revived only four seasons ago. Now they hope to follow other clubs that have been reborn — Oxford City and Bedford Town — into the ICS League and have clinched a three-year deal to use Sangate, the ground of Collier Row, the ICS League second division club, from next season.

Donal McGovern, who took Collier Row to the third division title last season, has masterminded Romford's rise this season. Among a wide-ranging trawl for players, McGovern has unearthed two cast-offs from professional clubs — Dean Calcott, 19, a prolific goalscorer with Tottenham Hotspur's youth team, and Marvin Rufus, 18, a former Leyton Orient youth player.

"You've got to remember that of 2,400 professionals at Premiership and Endsteigh clubs, 60 per cent have at one time or another been released by clubs as not being good enough," Goodwin said. "That includes David Platt, Les Ferdinand, Ian Wright and Peter Beardsley, so there are some good players about."

Junior ball game sparks pitched battle in courts

CONTRARY to popular belief, sport is part of real life and is therefore subject to the processes of the law. On the other hand, as the noted sports writer, Stephen Potter, pointed out: "Gambits are for use and not for overuse." It is legal week in this column and, naturally, the only logical place to start is the United States.

A woman has attempted to sue a nine-year-old baseball player in Connecticut. Johnny Lupoli is the Little League pitcher on whom the majesty of the law descended. In baseball, a wide is graphically called a "wild pitch". Lupoli let rip with a belter of a wild pitch that struck a female spectator in the face, before the camera turns elsewhere. Alberto Tomba has long been recognised as



SIMON BARNES
On Saturday

Street seller

The greatest excitement of watching skiing on the television is seeing if the skiers can get their logos on cameras. As soon as the course has been completed, the real race begins: a desperate struggle to get skis off in time to wave them in the public's face, before the camera turns elsewhere. Alberto Tomba has long been recognised as

heroes and joy-bringers of the 1990 World Cup when the Indomitable Lions, with Roger Milla to the fore, beat the world champions, Argentina, in the opening game. Now they are taking part in Africa's Olympic Games qualifying tournament — and have been stranded in Ghana. The head of the team's delegation has faxed Professor Joseph-Marie Bipoun Woum, Cameroon's youth and sports minister, for money to get home.

Frequent stopovers and complicated itineraries have drained the footballers' purses. In fact, the team only managed to get to Accra, the Ghanaian capital, a few hours before kick-off. Then they found that their new shirts clashed with the opposition's, while their old shirts had the wrong sponsor's logo. Eventually, they played in the old shirts, doctored with sticky tape. Unsurprisingly, they lost 3-0.

Aussie rules

Cricketer is a game about culture clashes and mutual incomprehension. The Australian newspaper publishes a list of dos and don'ts for Australians setting out across the world to play a season of club or league cricket. These include: "DO take plenty of cash to a game." The writer explains the system of buying a jug if you make a century or take five wickets. "As Australian cricketers are usually very successful in England, I have come to believe that this is the real reason we keep getting invited over."

Also, "DON'T sledge the opposition. There is not much on-field aggro in English club cricket. In fact, one common complaint is that it lacks the competitive edge of its Australian counterpart." What a rotten match — no one called me a boot-faced colonial boor even once.

Meanwhile, in Australia, two Australian yachtsmen have taken to the law — because they were not selected for the Olympic Games. John Forbes, who won a bronze medal in the Tornado class four years ago in Barcelona, and his partner, Darren Burdock, have asked a court in New South Wales to rule on the validity of the selection procedures. Their lawyers argued at a preliminary hearing this week that the selectors had changed their selection criteria, to the benefit of another yachtie. Perhaps English cricketers gain their places in the team by threatening to sue if not selected. That would certainly explain a good deal.

Marooned

How are the indomitable fallen. Cameroon were the

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Sampras injury puts Henman through

TIM HENMAN was awarded a free passage into the semi-finals of the men's indoor tennis tournament in Rotterdam yesterday after Pete Sampras, his opponent in the quarter-finals, withdrew through injury. Sampras, the world No.1, announced his withdrawal after injuring his ankle during his second-round victory over Jakob Hlasek, of Switzerland.

Sampras slipped and strained tendons during his 7-6, 6-4 defeat of Hlasek and put ice on his ankle overnight. However, after consulting an ATP Tour doctor, he limped out of the event and flew home

to the United States yesterday. "We have to announce that we have to say farewell to Sampras for this tournament," Wim Buitendijk, the tournament director, said. "We decided to wait overnight, but this morning his foot was swollen and blue."

It was the third disappointment for the organisers after Boris Becker and Michael Stich, of Germany, pulled out because of illness and injury respectively before the start on Monday. Stich has also been ruled out of Germany's Davis Cup fixture in France next month after having a foot operation.

فكرنا من الأصل

Three enlightened thinkers illuminate week

I have been having difficulty deciding my football personality of the week. There is a short-list of three: Edgar Davids, the dynamic force of another enthralling Ajax performance in Europe; there is his boss, who had some penetrating things to say about what people are doing to the world's best competition; and there is Cheryl Gillan, the Education and Employment Minister.

Gillan managed to pull the bickering English football fraternity together and extend the work permits of Marc Overmars and Lilie Dumitrescu. Her statement was enlightening: "We have recognised that it is important to allow British clubs to benefit from the contribution which top class [foreign] internationals can make, while still ensuring that opportunities for young players from this country to break into top flight football are not stifled."

Fowler falls victim to his country's age concern

The precocious Liverpool forward tells David Maddock he is ready for England

Why is it that English football is so suspicious of young talent? In Holland, they have Kluitert; in Spain, it is Raúl; in Portugal, Figo. Brazil have Juninho and countless others. In fact, everywhere you look in the world of international football, inexperienced players of immense talent are allowed to display the refreshing enterprise of their youth.



FA CUP

Not in England. Here, we are cautious, reluctant, repressive — frightened even — of youth. In England, we have Robbie Fowler, a blissfully natural goalscorer, the closest thing you can get to a goalscoring machine, and yet, even after two full seasons of remarkable feats — 78 goals in 129 games — he is still to make even an England squad, let alone an appearance. Would it be wrong to suggest it is because he is only 20 years old?

Even Fowler is perplexed. He received a late call into a recent get-together with Terry Venables, the England coach. Apart from that, nothing. No promise, no encouragement, no reward for his talent. When pressed on why he has been ignored so far, he flashes briefly behind Fowler's dark, narrow eyes.

"This age thing keeps cropping up, people keep saying I'm too young or that I've got time on my side," he said. "You know the sort of thing: 'If I don't make it this time,

Make her Minister for Sport. It is high time we had such clarity of thought rather than the mumbled and ineffective apologies from Iain Sproul. After Davids had played Borussia Dortmund, the German champions, off their own park on Wednesday, he admitted that AC Milan had been in contact, but that "I am also charmed by Barcelona and Real Madrid". However, he decided: "I have said I would decide by March or April whether I wanted to go or stay. That time has not run out yet. There are greater talents in the team than mine, I have to improve, to go further and I am aware that Ajax has been teaching us all very well."

What humility, what an absence of agents or spivs or other men trying to make up the decision of his young lifetime. Truly, Davids reflects the educative policies laid down by Louis van Gaal.

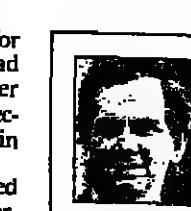
There's always the next. But to me, it's not like that. I'm not saying I should be in there, but I am saying that age shouldn't have anything to do with it. Look at Patrick Kluitert. I played against him for England Youth and now he's a regular for the full Holland side — and he's not done so badly, has he?

His answer is framed as a question, but in reference to himself, not Kluitert. We know exactly what the young Dutch forward has done; the inference is that Fowler could do the same, given the opportunity. And who would doubt even such a dramatic claim? Here is a player who will score goals at any level. They know that at Liverpool. It is why Ian Rush will be pensioned off at the end of the season.

Fowler has learnt from Rush, copied him and finally replaced him. Rush leaves with genuine admiration for the young man. "I honestly think I will be leaving Liverpool in safe hands. Robbie will probably eclipse everything I have achieved at the club," he said.

So why has he not announced himself on the wider stage that surely demands his presence? The answer probably lies somewhere between a traditional English mistrust of youth and a certain immaturity in the young man. It is hardly surprising, given a rise to fame that makes meteoric look modest. Barely three years ago, Fowler was on schoolboy terms at Anfield. Then the Graeme Souness revolution swept away the old guard and he was in the team, a wide-eyed 15-year-old.

A goal on his debut and five against Fulham in only his fourth start offered a fanfare to an uncommon talent, but there were problems. Fowler is



ROB HUGHES
Weekend View

When Uefa, European football's governing body, asked van Gaal, as the coach of the European Cup-holders, to contribute to its latest monthly magazine, it was inviting an exercise in democracy that few administrators would dare. If it knew the man, then it is to Uefa's credit that it was prepared to print his critical analysis.

"I regard as negative any situation where the commercial interests interfere with the game itself," he wrote. Imagine that sentence at a time when Europe's big clubs believed they had crushed Uefa into destroying the entire basis of competition by allowing a

second team, qualified or not, from the leading countries to enter the European Cup. We now know that this will not be in operation next season and van Gaal shares my hope that it will not happen.

The reason behind the formula is that it gives top clubs room for a mistake," he continued, "but that is no good argument because it is a commercial argument, not a footballing one."

Three cheers for the Dutchman. His article specified areas of growing concern. What was the good, he asked, of professional footballers warming up and then being asked to leave the field more than ten

minutes before kick-off? The reason, of course, was commercial, but van Gaal's concern was that players who cooled down were at serious risk of injury.

Furthermore, he showed pique at the rules restraining substitutes from warming up in front of advertising boards. "Are the substitutes' muscles not important?" he asked. And, given his forum, he was also critical of having three European competitions spread over Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. "For Ajax, the current formula is very good, because the Champions' League play in the middle of the week, but for others it means recuperation times are different with regard to domestic matches."

Lennart Johansson, the president of Uefa, should ensure that these arguments are thoroughly examined by the medical committee. He is a democrat, his challenge to the

president of Fifa, João Havelange, is based upon that and the European chief executive has previously shown a kindly eye to the welfare of the performers.

During this same week, we witnessed evidence that Germany, at club level, is falling behind Holland. Its football appears to echo England's two decades ago, when physical force and excess running were paramount. It is intriguing that Franz Beckenbauer, now the president of Bayern Munich, has struck a deal with Ajax.

The German club's experts are engaged on a long-term study of Ajax's youth training system, in exchange for which Ajax is monitoring the commercial and administrative structure in Munich. Two countries with open minds and realistic attitudes, learning together, instead of presuming that their own methods are impregnable.

Fulham and Gillingham were yesterday found guilty of misconduct by the Football Association for their parts in the Endleigh Insurance League third division match at Priestfield last November. Conflict between the rival players left one with a broken leg and produced ten bookings and two sendings-off, one mistakenly. The clubs were cleared of a charge of "failing to control their players".

An FA commission heard evidence from Mark O'Connor, still on crutches more than three months after the game, but deferred sentence until next week. Mick Bailey, the referee, and Lee Cable, one of the linesmen, talked the commission through video replays of the tackle by Mark Thomas that left O'Connor with a double fracture of a leg and sparked a "mass confrontation".

When that subsided, Bailey mistakenly sent off Martin Gray, on loan to Fulham, as well as Nick Cusack, the last ten minutes, Bailey said, were "the most disgusting exhibition by professional footballers that I have witnessed".

Jimmy Hill, the Fulham chairman, described the events of November 25 as "an unhappy afternoon". He said that Fulham had apologised to Gillingham and that Thomas as had been fined two weeks' wages. The player had also been warned that he would be dismissed if he was involved in similar scenes again.

Graeme Le Saux, the England full back, may yet make it to the European championship finals. The Blackburn Rovers player is recovering well after breaking his leg during an FA Carling Premiership match against Middlesbrough three months ago.

Chris Sutton, the Blackburn striker, is also well down the road to recovery after being out since November with ankle problems and is back in full training. Wembley and Doncaster Belles meet in the Women's League Cup final at Barnet tomorrow (2.30pm).

Fowler, who was forever pictured in style magazines with tongue protruding, gushing about the merits of drinking with his mates. The hope was that he would realise football is not all lads and lager.

The penny finally appeared to drop early this season. Fowler has had to do most of his growing up in public and it has been painful. Literally so when he experienced the ire of Neil Ruddock, his Liverpool team-mate, who cuffed him for a prank too far. Since then, Fowler has shown a new maturity.

Fowler visits Elland Road on Sunday for an FA Cup quarter-final tie with Leeds United knowing that even Venables must begin to take notice if he maintains his current, prolific form. An England future is not daunting.

"In the past, I've always said I wasn't ready, because that's what you do, but now I really do think I'm ready. I want a cap," he said. "I've played against the best defenders and have performed well enough. My aim is to continue that, take my chances in big games like this cup match and earn a cap by right, no matter what age I am."

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Hedblom gains head start in fruitful finale

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT IN RABAT

PETER HEDBLOM leads the Moroccan Open after a blazing finish that threatened to scorch the rain-dampened Royal Dar Es-Salam course yesterday. Hedblom had four successive birdies with which to conclude his second round, a five-under-par 67, and he had three before that. His was the lowest score not only of the second day but of the first as well and he has opened up a lead of four strokes over Phillip Price and six over Alexander Cejka.

Hedblom, who has sturdy shoulders, a wide, toothy smile and a shock of blond hair, resembles many of the 16 other Swedes competing here. Appearances can mislead, however, if they suggest that Hedblom, 26, is like all his countrymen. He is not. He has never drunk or smoked in his life.

"That is awesome, superb," Anders Forsbrand, the elder statesman among the Swedes on the PGA European Tour, said of his colleague's abstinence. "He has a rough fun as anyone else. He is a great guy."

He is also a free spirit among golfers who dedicate themselves totally to the game. Others metaphorically wrap themselves in cotton wool, eschewing skiing for example. Hedblom says that life is for living. "I like to do dangerous things. You must have fun even if it costs you your golf career. You could step off a kerb and get killed."

It might not seem much fun to be blindfolded and put in the ring with a Swedish boxing champion, but that is what happened to Hedblom on his 25th birthday — thanks to his friends. The blindfold off, he lasted three, three-minute rounds before, in defending himself, he bruised a rib. This led to a bout of pneumonia and he found himself on the sidelines for some weeks. After his boxing bout, he then walked the mile to his home

18 feet on the 16th, 17th and 18th holes. The stroke of luck that is needed in a round as good as this one came on the 15th, where he drove into the trees and needed a three-iron for his second on the 392-yard hole. He hit it to five feet and sank that one, too.

There will not be any competition for Hedblom from Severiano Ballesteros, whose downward spiral continued as he went round in 79 and 22 strokes behind Hedblom, missed the halfway cut by miles. Ballesteros went out in seven over par and came back in a level-par 36. "I have no confidence," Ballesteros said. "Always I hit the ball on the heel or the toe."

THE old demons returned to haunt Bernhard Langer as he missed the cut at the Honda Classic at Eagle Trace here yesterday. On a grey, windy, overcast day, the indomitable German suffered agonies on the greens and slumped to a 79, seven over par and a total of 152.

Peter Coleman, Langer's long-time caddy, confirmed there was a long putter already on order and said: "He's got to do something. He can't compete like this. He can't yip with the grip he's got, but he's not putting a proper stroke on it."

It was painful to watch. On his back nine, he three-putted four times in the first six holes, missing from two feet, twice. That nine read: bogey, double bogey, bogey, bogey, par, double bogey, birdie, birdie, par, 41. "I have no rhythm on my putting, no feel," Langer said. "I can't see the line and I can't feel the line. If the ball is on line, it's the wrong pace. Also

Fulham and Gillingham guilty of misconduct

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

FULHAM and Gillingham were yesterday found guilty of misconduct by the Football Association for their parts in the Endleigh Insurance League third division match at Priestfield last November. Conflict between the rival players left one with a broken leg and produced ten bookings and two sendings-off, one mistakenly. The clubs were cleared of a charge of "failing to control their players".

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MOTOR RACING 43

SCHUMACHER SHINES
BUT BRITON
SETS FASTEST TIME

SPORT

SATURDAY MARCH 9 1996

RUGBY UNION 45

WELSH DOUBTS OVER
THOMAS BRING JENKINS
BACK INTO FRAY

Sub-continent smoulders with hostility as England are deprived of their leading bowler

World Cup in the line of fire

FROM ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
IN BANGALORE

IN THE frantic streets of this city in southern India, a motor scooter wobbled between the belching buses and angrily tooting taxis yesterday, carrying a symbolic load. Perched precariously on the back, wide-eyed and white-knuckled with concentration, was a man cradling a television set under his arm. For those unable to buy, beg or borrow tickets for the match of their lifetime, a luxury item has suddenly become an essential.

The same streets will be empty this afternoon, save for the few thousand who will camp outside the Chinnaswami stadium, a vigil partly in protest at the impossibility of getting inside but more as an act of faith and commitment.

If the result goes the wrong way, late this evening, those streets will be best avoided, for there will be tears among the sweat-soaked blood, too.

This, you see, is like no other

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cricket match. This is India against Pakistan: a drama, a rivalry and, in present circumstances, an incongruity. Both sides of the border, newspaper front pages stir the rhetoric of what is effectively a war. Troops are launching rockets at each other. Nuclear threats are a daily occurrence. Down south, here in Bangalore, the sparring countries prepare to play a cricket match.

It is seven years since the teams met on anything but neutral territory. Between times, they have played in Sharjah and even on English football and athletics grounds, though crowd disorder in England has rarely allowed them to finish. No game between them, however, has ever meant more than this — not just because it is the quarter-final of the World Cup, not just because the global audience will boggle the mind, but because their countries are at each others' throats.

Many believed cricket could not rise above this conflict and some, the manipulators and malcontents, openly hoped it would not. But Thackeray, the extremist leader of the ruling Shiv Sena party in Bombay, has decreed that the Pakistan team will never set foot in "his city" and his supporters have claimed they will infiltrate today's game. Against such bitterness, such odds, the need for the day to pass off in peace transcends all else.

Cricketers cannot be immune to such responsibility and the strain was evident yesterday on the faces of the India team. They filed into a reception a little later and a lot less smartly than Pakistan.

They also, conspicuously, smiled less.

The home team must carry the local expectation of victory and the global demand for harmony. These burdens were not sitting comfortably on their shoulders.

Across the room, Wasim Akram, the Pakistan captain,



Security guards patrol the Chinnaswami stadium as the Pakistan players prepare for their match against India. Photograph: John Moore

could scarcely have looked more relaxed, and the distinction was not lost on him. "They were full of tension when we saw them yesterday," he said, gesturing at the Indians. "Our boys were laughing and joking."

"If we were playing in Pakistan, the roles would be reversed and the pressure would be on us. That is why it is preferable for us to play the

game here." Wasim broke off to hail his counterpart, Mohammed Azharuddin, who looked distracted. As the two shook hands, the space around them lit up with dozens of camera flashes. The greeting was genuinely friendly.

"We get along fine with their players," Wasim said. "It is politics that builds this game into something more than

cricket." Equally, it is politics that shames it. The Bangalore ground can hold more than 50,000, yet only 11,000 tickets were sold to the public.

The local authorities pleaded an "unprecedented demand" from VIPs, yet the truth is that too many tickets have gone to the influential and undeserving and far too many to the unscrupulous. I had not even emerged from

the arrivals hall at the airport before fielding the first offer of black-market tickets.

Resentment has understandably been aroused. Refuel it today with a Pakistan victory and even the startling security measures, which include 3,000 civil policemen,

three rapid action forces and a bomb squad, may be rendered impotent. Yet a Pakistan victory is a probability. The

longer the tournament has run, the more formidable the holders have become. India's graph has been entirely different — a rousing start faltering into doubts and defeats.

"The country speaks of only one player, for it is tacitly acknowledged that only he can bring the glory it craves. Sachin Tendulkar, a remarkably self-possessed young man, carries off the compli-

ment without apparent vanity or stress, but today, when he faces Wasim and Waqar Younis, the best new-ball pair in the world, who will be intent only on his dismissal, it will be his mental poise, as much as his wondrous talent, that will be examined as never before. So too will the mettle of the umpires, one of whom will be David Shepherd, of England. Raman Subba Row, a former chairman of the Test and County Cricket Board, will be the match referee.

Pakistan, meanwhile, wait upon their captain. Yesterday, Wasim was still suffering from a strained left side. "It hurts even to sneeze," he said, ominously. Yet, while patently unfit, Wasim speaks with defiance. "I will play if it is only 50 per cent right," he said. Therein lies the measure of this colossal occasion.

Lara attempts to defuse controversy

BY SIMON WILDE

WEST INDIES called a press conference on their arrival in Karachi yesterday to clear up what West Hall, their manager, called the "pusillanimous humbug" surrounding remarks attributed to Brian Lara in an Indian magazine earlier this week.

Lara apologised for them, but said they were taken out of context and contained no racial connotation.

The Outlook magazine quoted Lara as saying that West Indies bated losing to South Africa — whom they meet in a World Cup quarter-final on Monday — because they were a largely white

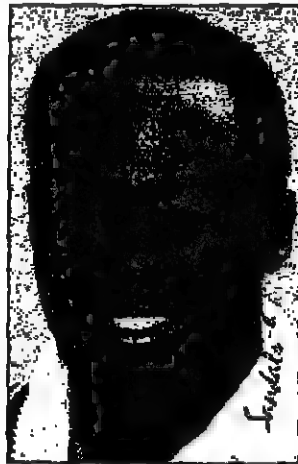
team. Lara said yesterday: "My words were: 'Today's defeat [by Kenya] was not as humiliating as the defeat back in 1992 when we first met South Africa. Why? Because South Africa [were] coming out of the apartheid era and West Indies [were] the best cricket team in the world.'"

He added: "I'm sorry for what has taken place. It hasn't dampened my relationship with South African people. I have spoken to some of the guys I know there and I think they understand my situation."

Lara pointed out that he had played in South Africa on

several occasions and conducted coaching clinics there in 1994. "I have no racial preferences in sport or any aspect of life. What has happened has been a big blow to me because of the respect I have for the administrators of cricket in South Africa, for the way they are developing cricket and the whole of the new South Africa. We have a great match on our hands. Let's not try and spoil it."

Bob Woolmer, the South Africa coach, had earlier responded to Lara's comments by saying: "You don't need any greater motivation than that."



Lara has coached and played in South Africa

Television deal delays climax to title race

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

FOR the third successive year, the final matches in the FA Cup and Premiership have been put back 24 hours to accommodate live television coverage. The fixtures due to be played on Saturday, May 4, will now be played on Sunday, May 5, all with 4pm kick-offs.

Last season, Blackburn Rovers won the title despite losing 2-1 at Liverpool. Manchester United failed to overhaul Blackburn by only drawing 1-1 at West Ham United. The games were shown simultaneously on the BSkyB sports channels.

Rick Parry, chief executive of the FA Premier League, said: "The decision to move all games will enable the Premier League to ensure that no club receives an unfair advantage by playing their final match later than anyone else. Clubs may only apply to have their match moved back to Satur-

No spring in Gardener's step

FROM DAVID POWELL
ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT
IN STOCKHOLM

JASON GARDENER probably wishes he had never run the fastest 60 metres by a European this year. As soon as he did it, he was under pressure and, in the Globe Arena yesterday, his world fell apart.

Unreasonably, given that he had no previous experience of a senior international championship, Gardener was built up as the favourite to win the European indoor championship gold medal here, to become the fourth successive Briton to hold the title after Linford Christie, Jason Livingston and Colin Jackson.

Aged 20, and visibly shocked by the experience, Gardener was eliminated in the first round. He false-started and then, anxious not to be disqualified for a second mistake, was over-cautious in his response to the gun. Last away, he pulled up to third

place, but it was not enough to take him into the semi-finals.

"All the pressure has been thrown at Gardener," Jason John, his fellow Briton, who reached the second round comfortably, acknowledged. Gardener, whose 6.55sec in the match against Russia six weeks ago held as the fastest time by a European up to these championships, managed only 6.79sec. He did not stop for Gardener's question time, leaving the stadium while reporters waited to interview him.

On the telephone later, he said: "I think I was a little bit unlucky, but rules are rules and you cannot argue with them." He was referring to the Seiko timing equipment, still relatively new to international athletics, but used for the world championships in Gothenburg last year, which is more sensitive to an athlete's movement while in the blocks.

Though there were many complaints among athletes in Gothenburg, any system

which improves the detection of illegal movement must be to the sport's advantage. Gardener was given a false start without leaving the blocks, but was clearly rocking in the set position. Ironically, only the day before, he had been making the point that he had never false-started. The Olympic Games in Atlanta this summer, he will be pleased to know, will be using a different timing system.

In other events on the first day of the three-day championships, Britain made encouraging progress. Ashia Hansen underlined her prospects of a medal in the women's triple jump final today by recording the second-longest qualifying distance. Iva Prandzeva, from Bulgaria, the silver medal-winner in Gothenburg, jumped 14.37 metres in qualifying, with Hansen on 14.32 metres. Hansen thus avoided the realisation of her worst fear — failing to qualify for the final. "I do worry about it," she had said on Thursday. She

had not progressed beyond the qualifying round in three successive international championships.

Nick Buckfield earned his place in the 12-man pole vault final today with a qualifying clearance of 5.55 metres. Mark Proctor reached the shot final with a personal best 19.12 metres, elevating himself to seventh place in the all-time British rankings.

Du'aine Ladejo, Britain's best hope for a title, won his heat of the 400 metres and Kent Ulyatt, called in as a reserve after Mark Hylton and Guy Bullock withdrew injured, did the same. The semi-finals are today.

The next world championships are in Athens in 1997, but whether they will be seen live on British television remains open to question. Bo Gentzel, of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), said yesterday that the EBU and the International Amateur Athletic Federation were "miles apart" in negotiations.

Withdrawal of Cork adds to Atherton's woe

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN FAISALABAD

DOMINIC CORK, the only bowler who takes his place in the England team by right, was yesterday ruled out of the World Cup quarter-final against Sri Lanka, which was due to have got under way in Faisalabad early today.

Cork, who has a history of knee trouble, had been struggling for a week with his latest injury and withdrew yesterday. His place was expected to go to his Derbyshire teammate, Phillip DeFreitas.

The absence of Cork deprived Michael Atherton, the England captain, of the one bowler who has commanded the respect of opponents in the past year for a match against arguably the most powerful batting side in the competition.

Sri Lanka have scored more than six runs an over in this World Cup and recorded the highest score in one-day international cricket this week, 398 for five against Kenya, who had just bowled out West Indies for 93.

"Injuries always seem to come along just when you don't want them," said Cork, who hopes to be fit for the semi-final in Calcutta on Wednesday, should England reach it. "Although it is not too bad, I am struggling to put pressure on the knee and it hurts when I run. It would be wrong to go into such a big game carrying an injury, then break down and let the team down."

Cork injured his right knee in Lahore, before the tournament began, and has never shaken it off. Phillip Bell, the team doctor, said that it was caused by over-use and that the only cure was a lengthy rest. Bell has already prescribed a six-week period "off games" when Cork returns to England.

Atherton took a philosophical view of Cork's withdrawal. "We brought a 14-man squad and expected to use all the players because of injury and illness. Someone else will now come in and it is up to him to put in a good performance, so that we won't miss Dominic."

England's progress in this competition has been halted every turn of the way by injury and disappointment. Craig White went home with a groin strain after failing to complete

the first game, against New Zealand, and Neil Fairbrother returned to England this week after tearing a hamstring in the defeat by Pakistan.

England won only two of their five group matches, against Holland and United Arab Emirates, and have generally made a bad impression with their lack of grace.

Despite these setbacks, Atherton continued to bang the drum yesterday. "Sri Lanka are probably the in-form side, along with South Africa, but that just makes it a bigger challenge," Atherton said. "They have a lot of shot-makers and, while their bowling is not as strong, it is stronger than a couple of years ago." And, he might have added, it is no weaker than England's.

DeFreitas, who has featured in two World Cup finals and recently played his hundredth



Quarter-finals
TODAY: Sri Lanka v England (Faisalabad, 4pm); India v Pakistan (Bangalore, 5pm)
MONDAY: South Africa v West Indies (Karachi, 4pm); Australia v New Zealand (Melbourne, 6pm)
TV TIMES: Today: Live coverage, England v Sri Lanka and India v Pakistan (Sky Sports, from 3.55pm); Highlights (BBC, 11.45pm); Monday: Live coverage, West Indies v South Africa and Australia v New Zealand (Sky Sports, from 3.45pm); Highlights (BBC2, 11.15pm)

one-day international, may bowl off spin in an attempt to contain the Sri Lankans.

Raymond Illingworth, the team manager, warned that England had to be flexible in the first 15 overs of the innings when a team is permitted only two fielders more than 30 yards from the bat. "We have been working hard on trying to bowl as straight as possible," Illingworth said. "I don't think any team has worked harder in practice, so let's hope it pays dividends."

Defeat would bring Illingworth's dual job, as manager and chairman of selectors, into focus when the Test and County Cricket Board meets later this month.

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TRAVEL



Jeremy
Paxman
walks
hidden
Tuscany

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THE TIMES SATURDAY MARCH 9 1996

MARRIAGE COUNSELLING: HOW IT WORKED FOR US

By Theresa Buck

My experience of facing imminent divorce with three children has shown me how little Tom and I understood about the flash points in our marriage. I was always the breadwinner, insisting that I didn't mind when, actually, I did. I wanted children. Tom wasn't keen, but I had them anyway, the first one "accidentally" hoping it would work out. Tom was frightened by the responsibility.

Tom adored the babies but, as responsibility at home mounted, his appearances there became rarer — it turned into a bed-and-breakfast marriage. As the hideous pressures of my publishing job grew I brought my work manners home, treated everybody with the same bright forthrightness I use in the office, undermining Tom with frosty efficiency. I expected him to be around in the evenings and weekends as my father had been. He wanted to go down to the pub or watch rugby matches or work on his latest painting as he did, increasingly, through the night.

Any expert counsellor could have told us that any one of these events and problems was a potential marriage breaker, and if we'd got to grips earlier we might have made it. As it was I unearthed two — extremely expensive and utterly unsuitable — marriage counsellors on the recommendations of friends and plunged us both into counselling without first finding out whether the counsellors were properly trained, or whether they were supervised by a recognised marriage guidance organisation.

The first, a woman, shouted down the stairs at me as I left after one session: "The fact that you use a name other than your husband's is most significant. Think about it." The second, a grey-haired man with a distinguished reputation, fell asleep, actually more than once. We went to each, at least once a week, for just over a year.

Why did we allow this \$80 an hour doze? Larnely, I can only say that when you are as upset and as uncommunicative as we were, common sense can be left behind. Our third counsellor is from Relate. She is sensible, and she gets us to talk to each other and to listen to each other. It sounds simpler than it is.

Our 11-year marriage is likely to end in divorce, but on a more civilised basis than we were crashing towards before. We have failed our children but we will now negotiate as decent a settlement for them as we can manage. At least they will no longer have to witness or endure the violent rows or icy silences between us. Our expectations of each other are irreconcilable. Relate counts this recognition of reality as some kind of success. Now we have intelligent discussions about custody for the three boys, and the finances, where before it was a snarling: "I'll make it difficult for you in court."

However the Princess Royal chooses to knock it, this is the age of counselling. The Princess of Wales, still patron of Relate, not so long ago sat in on counselling sessions. Now, the Princess is having counselling twice a week in the run up to her divorce. The Duchess of York has had counselling; and her friend the actress Pamela Stephenson is training in psychotherapy, often regarded as one of the best backgrounds for a counsellor.

Relate, nationwide gives 450,000 counseling sessions a year, and the London Marriage Guidance Council has around 12,000 clients a year. The numbers grow every year, although people in their forties and older still seem to regard counselling as

Continued on page 3, col 1

Typical Examples:

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York Building Society	18.9%	£116.33	£5,583.84	£169.92	16.9%	£197.40	£9,475.20	£447.84
The Royal Bank of Scotland	18.7%	£116.00	£5,568.00	£154.08	17.5%	£199.32	£9,567.36	£540.00

†Rates are correct as at 04/03/96. The rates quoted are for new customers. Existing customers may be eligible for a different rate.

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Planning to see a show or a film, an exhibition or a concert? *The Times* critics select the best entertainment

GALLERIES

Richard Cork

SPELLBOUND To mark the centenary of the first film screening in Britain, the Hayward Gallery has mounted an enjoyable show celebrating the love affair between art and film. Eduardo Paolozzi, the oldest exhibitor, displays a vast treasure-house filled with film-studio props. Paula Rego's vigorous pastels pay alarming homage to Disney's *Fantasia* and *Snow White*. But other artists make films of their own, ranging from the witty animation of Boyd Webb's popcorn story to Damien Hirst's macabre *Hanging Around* and Steve McQueen's suspenseful *Stigmata*. The film directors' contributions are less impressive: Ridley Scott is oddly subdued and Terry Gilliam lightweight. But Peter Greenaway's noisy, flashing installation is shamelessly theatrical, and Douglas Gordon's 24-hour version of *Psycho* is a slow, mesmerising revelation.

Hayward Gallery, South Bank Centre, London SE1 (0171-261 0127), until May 6. Paolozzi is also showing at Jason and Rhodes, 4 New Burlington Place, London W1 (0171-434 1789), until March 23.

LISA MILROY AND DILLER + SCOFIDIO A well-balanced double bill at the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham, where Lisa Milroy's travel paintings occupy the upper space with quiet assurance. Showing great technical virtuosity, Milroy takes her own photographs as the starting-point for a remarkably limpid range of views. Her small paintings of Tokyo are a delight, but the American Holiday sequence offers a rich range of snapshot images. Downstairs the New York-based architect Diller + Scofidio have installed *Slow House*, a series of lecture-shaped structures based on an oceanfront house they have designed for a Long Island site. Written observations on each crystal screen fade when lights reveal a photograph, drawing or model behind. A thoughtful work, impeccably well organised. Ikon Gallery, John Bright Street, Birmingham (0121-643 0708); Milroy until March 23, Diller + Scofidio, last day today.

CLASSICAL

Richard Morrison

ECO GALA Pinchas Zukerman directs from the violin as the English Chamber Orchestra celebrates its 35th birthday with a Royal Gala in the presence of the



Zukerman: directing the English Chamber Orchestra

Prince of Wales. The orchestra has plenty of reasons to celebrate, too. Although it is not at the cutting-edge of British musical life quite as often as it was during its long collaboration with Benjamin Britten and Aldeburgh in the 1960s and early 1970s, it has maintained a remarkably high standard over the years. In this concert Zukerman plays the Beethoven Violin Concerto

and directs operatic arias and overtures by Mozart. Barbican, Silk Street, London SE1 (0171-638 8991), Tues 12, 7.30pm.

FIFTIES EPIC The Towards the Millennium festival of 1950s art and music continues with a rare, and a vast one at that: Martin's cantata *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, based on the ancient Babylonian story. The Czech composer has never gained much of a following in Britain — yet his music is attractive, approachable and has a strong mystical atmosphere. In these concerts, by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Sir Simon Rattle, it is coupled with another highly-charged 1950s masterpiece from East Europe: Shostakovich's magnificent Tenth Symphony. Symphony Hall, Birmingham (0121-212 3333), Wed 13, 7.30pm; Festival Hall, South Bank, London (0171-960 4242), Thur 14, 7.30pm.

ROCK

David Sinclair

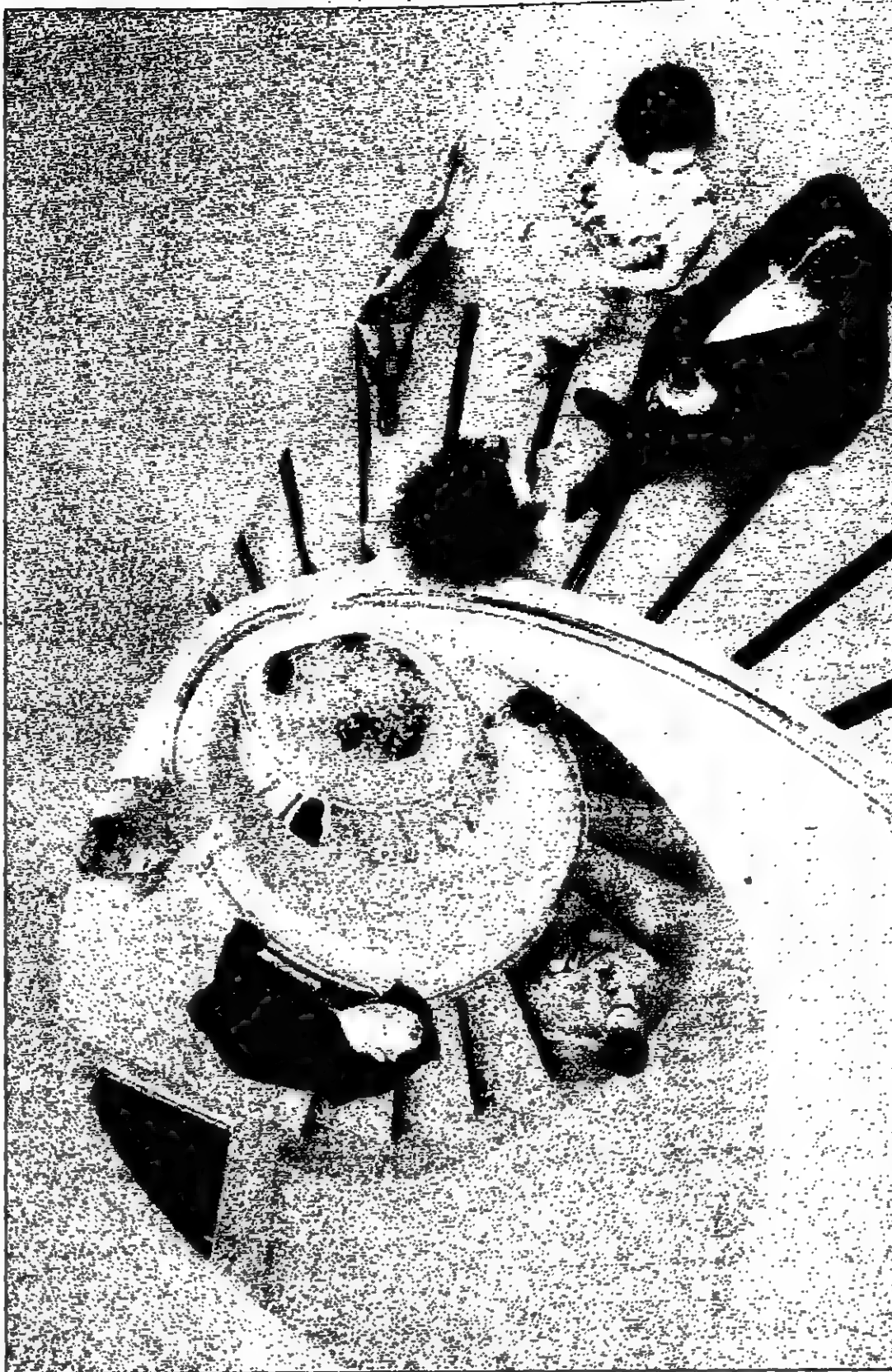
EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL In an ironic twist, Everything But the Girl's final single for the record company that dropped them last year — a Todd Terry remix of *Missing* — has turned into the biggest hit of the duo's 14-year career. Now signed to a different label, they have shifted the emphasis away from the sedate folk-jazz sound of their work in the 1980s, towards a "drum and bass" dancefloor style on their forthcoming album, *Walking Wounded*. Bristol University (0117-429 9009), March 13; De Montfort University, Leicester (01533 555576), March 14; Middlesbrough Town Hall (01842 242561), March 15; Leadmill, Sheffield (0114-275 4500), Mar 17; Northwick Theatre, Worcester (01905 755141), March 18. Also University of East Anglia, Norwich, March 19; Pyramids Centre, Portsmouth, March 21; Shepherd's Bush Empire, London, March 22.

BILLIE RAY MARTIN Formerly the singer with radical cult dance act Electric 101, Billie Ray Martin has taken a significant step towards mainstream success with her debut solo album, *Deadline For My Memories*. Combining a voice that echoes the sweeping emotional power of Alison Moyet with the coolest dancefloor beats, she is a rapidly emerging talent of considerable poise and promise. Kings College, London WC2 (0171-836 7132), Mar 14; Hippo Club, Cardiff (01222 341463), Mar 15; Lakota, Bristol (0117-942 6208), Mar 16; University of East Anglia, Norwich (01603 358608), Mar 20. Also Sankey's Soap, Manchester, Mar 21; Ministry of Sound, London, Mar 22; Roadrunner, Northampton, Mar 26; Nightingale, Birmingham, Mar 29; LA2, London W1, Apr 3; Leadmill, Sheffield, Apr 7; Jazz Cafe, London NW1, May 5.

OPERA

Rodney Milnes

TRISTAN AND ISOLDE As the English National Opera's runaway success draws to the end of its initial run, there is a new Isolde in Mary Lloyd-Davies, who made such a strong impression in last November's Chelsea Opera Group concert performance of *Tannhäuser* on the South Bank — a firm, athletic and highly musical singer whose assault on this Everest of soprano roles is awaited with great interest. Otherwise Mark Elder's intense, searching conducting, David Alden's spare production, George Gray's solid Tristan, and superb supporting performances



A scene from Damien Hirst's macabre *Hanging Around*, at the Spellbound exhibition (see Galleries)

from Gwynne Howell and Jonathan Summers are constants. Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (0171-632 8000), Mon 11, 5pm.

DON PASQUALE For an altogether lighter, nearly planned satyr-play approach to the wretched Eternal Triangle, try Donizetti's merry comedy-with-the-occasional tear — tunes, more tunes and inimitably sparky orchestration. The revival of Patrick Mason's modern-dress production has an inviting cast: vivacious Mary Hegarty as Norina/Isolde, dashing Neil Archer as Ernesto/Tristan, and the immortal Donald Adams as Pasquale/King Mark. Suave Alan Opie completes the cast as Dr Malatesta and the conductor is Michael Lloyd. Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (0171-632 8000), Tues 12, Thurs 14, 7.30pm.

THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

COMPANY A well-merited transfer for Sam Mendes's intimate version of a show that, when staged at Her Majesty's 20-odd years ago,

seemed more a garish attack on the pressures of city life than a rumination about the whys and wherefores of wedlock. Though Stephen Sondheim's trademark cynicism is still evident and the wit of his rhymes undimmed, the emotional balance has shifted. The musical has become a sympathetic, inquiring, even tender exploration of the mind of Adrian Lester's bachelor, flummoxed as it is by the confusions and disasters afflicting Sophie Thompson, Sheila Gish and his other married friends. Albery, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (0171-369 1730), Evenings: Monday to Saturday, 7.45pm; matinees: Wed and Sat, 3pm.

TOMMY If you are afraid your ears will get splintered, or your mind shredded, be reassured. Des McAnuff's production of Pete Townshend's tale of the autistic boy turned pop messiah, while not the most musically or intellectually taxing piece ever written, comes across with such skill, drive and visual derring-do that the only risk is indignation of your over-leasted eyes. And Paul Katterbach brings force as well as vulnerability to a Tommy who whirls about in a pinball machine that looks like a flying saucer spilling fairy-dust. Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2 (0171-379 5399), Mon to Sat, 8pm; matinees: Wed and Sat, 3pm.

DANCE

John Percival

SOUTH BANK DANCE Audiences will sit on the stage at the Queen Elizabeth Hall tonight and tomorrow for *The Reverse Effect* in which choreographers Wayne McGregor, Wendy Houston and Lea Anderson set their dancers to work in the hall's seats, aisles, lighting boxes and projection booths. (Two shows nightly, 7.45 and 9.30.) Back to normal seating (Friday 15 and Saturday 16, 7.45pm) for the British premiere of Shobana Jayasingh's *Lulu Ya Tuuli* (The Bird and the Wind), based on Indian and Finnish folk poems, to music by Eero Hameenniemi. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London (0171-960 4242).

ROYAL BALLET This week's London performances at Covent Garden are the last here until April: Giselle with Sylvie Guillem on Tuesday and Thursday, a mixed bill including Ashton's virtuoso

piece *Rhapsody* and MacMillan's dramatic *The Invitation* on Wednesday and Friday. Then a group of 30 dancers goes on tour for two weeks to small, regional theatres with Forsythe's thrillingly athletic *Stephens* and a clutch of new works by mostly young choreographers. Royal Opera House, London, WC2 (0171-304 4000), March 12-15, 7.30pm; Wycombe Swan (01494 512000), March 18, 7.30pm; March 19, 2pm and 7.30pm; Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield (0114 726 9922), March 21-23, 7.45pm; March 23, 3pm; Grand Theatre, Blackpool (01253 28372), March 25, 7.30pm; March 26, 2pm, 7.30pm; Theatre Royal, Bath (01225 448844), March 28-30, 8pm; March 30, 2.30pm.

MUSEUMS

John Russell Taylor

WILLIAM MORRIS REVISITED Usually the last thing that a centenary exhibition would be expected to do is to "question the legacy" but that is precisely the programme of this new exhibition, organised by and starting its tour at the Whitworth, lays down in its subtitle. This year is the hundredth anniversary of William Morris's death, and we are due for a number of shows on the subject. This one is admiring but not too reverential. The legacy at issue is the whole Arts and Crafts movement, automatically but not as here demonstrated correctly, entirely associated with Morris's name. Morris was, for example, much more accepting of industrial process than some of his flower-children successors imagine. One of the key questions is: what exactly does "handmade" mean? Some of the answers, as presented in the work of Morris himself and such moderns as Danny Hill, Janice Tchalenko and Kaffe Fassett, are provocative.

Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester (0161-275 7450), Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm; Sun, 2-5pm, until April 7.

ETIENNE DELAUNE Among its many unexpected riches the Ashmolean counts one of the largest collections in existence of French ornament drawings from the 16th century. The majority are attributed to the silversmith Etienne Delaune (1518-1578), active in Paris at the time of Henri II and Catherine de Medici. Delaune designed, on occasion, royal suits of armour and large pieces in gold and silver, but most of the exquisitely finished designs on vellum are for jewels, which played an important part in the politics of the period. Very few of the jewels themselves survive, but we know that some of these designs were made for the royal couple and for Diane de Poitiers, while others can be associated with such temporary denizens of the court as Mary Queen of Scots. There are also designs for jettons, often matched with finished pieces struck at the Paris Mints in the 1550s. Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont Street, Oxford (0865 278010), Tues-Sat, 10am-4pm; Sun 2-4pm, until May 12.

FILMS

Geoff Brown

LA CEREMONIE (15) The veteran French director Claude Chabrol's best film in years: a cool, darkly comic version of Ruth Rendell's novel *A Judgement in Stone*, updated and transferred to a windswept Brittany. Sandrine Bonnaire is the secretive housemaid whose position as the perfect help is undermined when she builds a friendship with the inso-

lent village postmistress (Isabelle Huppert). Chabrol delights in the class distinctions that fuel the drama, though he is careful not to categorise any side as villain or victim, and his even-handed approach makes the violent climax all the more shocking. With Jacqueline Bisset and Jean-Pierre Cassel. MGMs: Chelsea (0171-352 5096), Haymarket (0171-839 1527), Swiss Centre (0171-439 4470), Tottenham Court Road (0171-636 6148).

RESTORATION (15) Gaze with awe at Charles II's Court, and the waning ways of the King's favourite physician, Robert Downey Jr. Early enjoyment of this lavish edition of Rose Tremain's novel drains away when the hero reforms and does good deeds. Director Michael Hoffman and his technical team work stylish wonders on a medium budget. Consumes and sets boggle the eyes: if only we cared more about the human beings. With Sam Neill, Meg Ryan and, briefly, Hugh Grant. MGMs: Baker Street (0171-436 9772), Chelsea (0171-352 5096), NET (0171-928 3332), Odeons: Kensington (01426 914666), Swiss Cottage (01426 914088), West End (01426 915574), UCI Whiteleys (0171-702 3332).

JAZZ AND CABARET

Clive Davis

RITA COOLIDGE Back in the 1970s Mrs Kris Kristofferson, as she was then, took an old Jackie Wilson soul hit, *Higher and Higher*, and re-worked it as a funky piece of soft-rock. The daughter of a Baptist minister, she was re-interpreting rhythm and blues for a mainstream audience — and doing so very tastefully — long before the industry moguls had heard of Michael Bolton or Mariah Carey. Café Royal, Regent St, London W1 (0171-437 9090), Tues 12 to Sat 30 (except Sundays and Mondays).

CHICK COREA/JESSICA WILLIAMS The good news about Chick Corea's appearance this week is that he has left his white-bang fusion group at home. The American keyboard virtuoso will be working in an uncompromised acoustic format, leading a quartet including another Miles Davis acolyte, the saxophonist Bob Berg. A subtle colourist, Jessica Williams has worked her way to the front rank of piano players without hype or assistance from the main labels. Dave Brubeck and Humphrey Lytton have led the praise. She slips into Britain for a solo tour, reaching the South Bank's Purcell Room at the end of the month.



Acoustic keyboard: Chick Corea fronts a quartet at the Barbican

Corea: Barbican Centre, Silk Street, London EC2 (0171-638 8991), Mon 11.
Williams: Holywell Music Room, Holywell St, Oxford (information 01993 702748), tomorrow; Gardner Arts Centre, Brighton (01273 658580), Tues 12; Darlington Arts Centre (01423 841668), Fri 15; Caidman Hall, Gateshead (01691-477 3478), Sat 16.

WEST END THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London
House full, return only | Score seats available | Circle at all prices

LEE EVANS The rubber-boned comedian here for a short season. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8pm and 8.30pm.

THE CHANGING ROOM David Storey's fascinating play about a noisy house team preparing for the final game. Third in the season of Royal Court Classics. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Triumph return for Peter Hall's production of Wilde's drama of political deceit and scandal. The star cast includes Martin

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT Philo Spector plays the lead with the great Lyric Theatre revival of the first Lyric production. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

THE KING OF PRUSSIA The first of the "Four Corners" plays to be given a new production. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

THE MIDSUMMERS The first of the "Four Corners" plays to be given a new production. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

KIM WILDE, Alistair Robins Tommy, the Shaftesbury

Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

AN INSPECTOR CALLS Stephen Delaney's powerful production. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

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conflicts in the form of a parody reunion between two lovers. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

SWEET PASCAL Stephen Polaski's thought-provoking play about the psychology of a child. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

TALKING TO ABUSE The world and music of Noel Coward, brought to life with skilful, sometimes mischievous wit, by Peter Greenfield. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

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NEW RELEASES

LA CEREMONIE (15) See Choice Critic, above.

RESTORATION (15) See Choice Critic, above.

UNDERGROUND (15) Exhausting comic about war in the Balkans. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

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CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol *) on release across the country

FATHER OF THE BRIDE PART II (15) Steve Martin leads the parade of his last. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5049), Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, Sun, 3pm.

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Jacqueline Bisset smoulders in Chabrol's *La Ceremonie*

DUXIANA

Need a new mower? Stephen Anderton looks at the latest developments and Nigel Hawkes offers a guide to alternative lawnsman'ship

New machines at the cutting edge

Fine turf and gravel paths or drives can make mowing partners. The gravel finds its way on to the lawns, spun from the wheels of cars or carried by wellies. Then it gets into lawnmowers, jamming between the bottom blade and the cylinder and spoiling the cutting edges. The result can be a streak of unkempt grass in an otherwise immaculate sward.

The rotating blades of the cylinder and the bottom blade should meet like scissors, and when one of the blades is damaged the only way to restore full contact is to have it reground. Until recently that meant taking the whole machine to the repairers. Now Atco-Quailex has launched a range of mowers with a removable cylinder and bottom blade cassette, which is less cumbersome to take to a repairer for regrounding. It is called the QX (Quick Exchange) system and is available in the Atco, Quailex and Suffolk Punch ranges. (Rival manufacturer Dennis has a similar system but its machines are aimed at the professional market.)

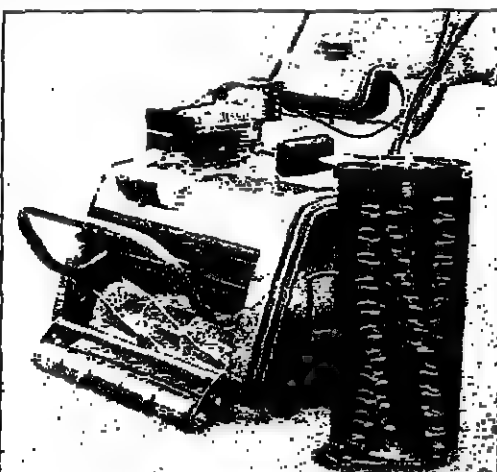
And why would you not take the cylinder out of an old-style mower? Well you could, but it meant disconnecting drives, handling the sharp blades and, of course, if the bottom blade was damaged it was easier to give the whole machine to the repairer so that he could set it up to cut properly after regrounding.

The QX system requires the removal of a few nuts and bolts, after which the cassette can be pulled out by its carrying handle. It is not exactly child's play but, then, I would not wish to use a mower whose blades were fixed in any less securely. (EC safety legislation is now so restrictive that too much safety rather than

Blade cassettes can make repairs a great deal easier

too little is usually the problem. On some rotary mowers the engine is designed to cut out every time you stop to empty the grass box. Barry.)

There are many advantages to the QX system. DIY mechanics can do their own servicing in winter and pay only to have the blade unit sharpened. Little-used mowers may go perhaps two years



Atco's removable cylinder/bottom blade cassette

between full servicing but have the blade unit sharpened each year. Atco-Quailex hopes to persuade its service agents to stock spare cassettes to lend to customers.

To be fair to rivals of Atco-Quailex and Dennis, the idea of removable cutting units on triple mowers has been around for years. These are the mowers, usually of the ride-on type, which trail a trio of hydraulic cylinder cutting units. Each unit is relatively easy to drop from the machine but is nowhere near as manageable as the Atco cassette.

Among smaller mowers for pedestrian use, the cassette is a

welcome development. Not that all cylinder mower owners spend the summer going backwards and forwards with blades for repair. Most seasons will pass without accident, and a removable blade is probably of greatest advantage to the lawn perfectionist.

The clever thing about the QX system is that, having developed a removable cutting cassette, the logical conclusion (which Atco and Dennis have reached) is to see what else can be slotted into the machine. The obvious choice was a scarifier, and all QX models can double up as a powered scarifier.

The larger petrol machines, for bigger areas, can take a 20in-wide scarifier, but the electric machines stop at 14in. This is just as I would hope, because scarifying is a tough business and will pass more vibration and general wear and tear into the machine than simple mowing. The tines (little rakes) which do the work are set in a spiral arrangement on the cassette so that, as it rotates, contact with the lawn is constant and even, and the vibration minimised. Wear and tear apart, combining a mower and scarifier

in one machine makes sense, not least because it is one less machine clogging up the garden shed and one less engine to service.

Atco-Quailex, Suffolk Works, Milton Road East, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 1EY (01449 612183), makes mowers, scarifiers for domestic gardens from £170, and heavy-duty mowers, scarifiers from £380. Dennis, Ashbourne Road, Kirk Langley, Derby DE6 4NU (01332 824777), makes heavy-duty mowers, scarifiers from £2,300, plus VAT. Ransomes (Suffolk) and Ipswich, Ransomes Way, Ipswich IP3 9QG (01473 270000), makes quality large-cylinder mowers from £1,510, plus VAT.



Nigel Hawkes with his collection of lawnmowers — (from left, front row) a Hayter 20in cylinder, an 18in Hayter rotary and a Flymo cultivator

The art of coarse mowing

The happy day is fast approaching when you haul the mower from the garden shed, give a sharp pull on the starter cord and... it breaks.

Even if it doesn't, the odds are the engine won't start, the blades are rusty, or the grass has already grown too long to cut except by touting to and fro, to and fro until sunset.

For most of us, immaculately striped lawns are as attainable as the dark side of the moon. So why not join the Company of Coarse Mowers, folk who get their fun out of the velvety sheen of the lawn but from unrepentantly thumbing their noses at the rules?

I once bought a book titled *Be Your Own Lawn Expert*, by Dr D.G. Hessayon. On page 1 it asked you to classify your lawn: was it first class, second

class or something in between? Mine was BA Calcutta (failed). Coarse Mowers read everything that is written about lawn care, but only to disregard it. Every autumn they rejoice in the annual articles telling them how to put their mowers to bed for the winter.

The master of this prose-form is W.F. Deedes, better known as Lord Deedes, whose mowers articles sing from the page. He recommends, *inter alia*, that sumps should be drained and refilled. Fuel tanks should be drained (using a pipette) and cleaned (normally with a cloth-wrapped screwdriver, that the spark plug is removed and "an eggspoon of oil" is dropped on the piston head. Oil filters should be removed and cleaned in detergent, boiled linseed oil applied to the rollers (if made of wood) and so on, and on, and on. It takes a whole day.

Coarse Mowers do none of these things. They drive the mower into the shed, turn off the engine and shut the door. It takes a whole minute.

But doesn't this shorten the mower's life? Of course, but the point is that Coarse Mowers never buy new machines, or get the old ones serviced. They acquire machines from friends, or from eccentrics who buy them at country auctions and do them up.

TIP 1: it is nearly always cheaper to buy a second-hand mower than to get one serviced.

One of my small collection, a Toro rotary, cost me £35 at least ten years ago and has been going, more or less, ever since. It once had a self-starter and battery, but that was long before I owned it. We Coarse Mowers disdain such frippery devices. The only way to get this mower started is to wind a cord around the pulley, yank hard, grip the roaring machine with both hands, and take off like Linford Christie.

Starting mowers after a winter of neglect is one of the treats of spring. TIP 2: if it won't start, take the plug out, wave it around in the air, clean it with a grubby handkerchief and put it back in.

TIP 3: if it won't start, try taking out the air filter. If you haven't followed advice about cleaning the filter — what do I mean, if — it will be clogged. An engine once given a chance to breathe will often go. Then you can put the dirty filter back in again.

TIP 4: never get rid of old mowers if you can possibly find somewhere to store them.

There will always come a day when, however awful they are, they become better than you could try a trick taught me by a man who sold me the worst mower I ever owned. He took the plug out, cleaned it and then rubbed the electrodes with an ordinary lead pencil. The graphite in the pencil was supposed to make the spark leap with unaccustomed zeal between the points. Does it work? Heaven knows, but it makes you feel better.

What to do with the cuttings is another problem area. Some years ago an academic from, I think, Reading University, declared that cuttings were best left to moulder on the ground. As this takes far less effort than collecting them, I naturally seized on the advice. The result was a lawn so full of thatch that it could have re-roofed Anne Hathaway's cottage. Rotten advice. Reading.

So now I collect the cuttings and pile them into what are laughingly called compost heaps. Grass doesn't compost, actually: not even if you add chopped up copies of *The Times* or compost accelerators: not even if you turn the heap weekly (not that I have ever tried this, but I just know it wouldn't work).

What emerges from my heaps is not compost but foul-smelling sludge. The only member of the household to appreciate it is the dog, who plunges his face and paws into it and then trots indoors. But, spread on the vegetable garden and worked in, the sludge eventually disappears, and it doesn't seem to do much harm.

WEEKEND TASKS

- Prune *Buddleia davidii* hard back to a framework of older wood, even though this means losing some new shoots.
- Cut down newly planted raspberry canes to 9in high. Apply potash to established canes.
- Begin outdoor sowings of broad beans, brussels sprouts, carrots, parsnips and summer spinach.
- Stand pots of flowered narcissi or hyacinths in a light, cool place, such as a cold frame, to die down, or plant out in the garden.

S.A.

HOMES & GARDENS

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GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON replies to readers' letters

Q At the back of my house, and shaded by it, is a steep earth bank. During heavy rain, water washes the soil down the bank. What ground cover plants would stabilise the soil? — G.A. Taylor, North Curry, Somerset.

A You need plants that bind tightly under the soil as well as on the surface, so plants with only a tap root will not do. You also need plants which, if not evergreen, retain cover through the winter to prevent erosion. Grass is the most efficient cover. Otherwise, try *Geranium macrorrhizum*, *pulmonarias*, *Alchemilla mollis*, *bergenias*, *lily of the valley*, *day lilies*, *male ferns*, *hostas*, *Persicaria*, *affinis*, *Solomon's seal*, and *Trachystemon orientalis*. Plant more thickly than is necessary to speed up cover.

Q I have a weeping 'Kilmarnock' willow on a 28in stem in a mixed border. How can I maintain its umbrella effect, have plenty of "bushes", and not have branches reaching the ground? — Mrs G. H. Preston, Lymington, Hampshire.

A This form of *Salix caprea* is grown for its stiff, weeping habit, and must be grafted on to a stem of the ordinary, upright *S. caprea*. It is a male clone and has golden pussy willow catkins. (The silver catkin form is known as Weeping Sally.) To keep it well-flowered and healthy, and to maintain a regular, fresh fountain of weeping stems, requires regular cutting. This is done by thinning the canopy and shortening back some growths at the top. The flowers are produced best on the branches which receive the most light, so it is important not to take off all the outer branches when thinning. The longer branches may be shortened back in autumn so that they do not sweep the ground.

This is a curiously formal plant, and not everyone's favourite. It is widely available as a waist-high standard, but it might be interesting to use it on a pergola or weeping over the top of a wall.

Readers wishing to have their gardening problems answered should write to: Garden Answers, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. We regret that few personal answers can be given and that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times also regrets that enclosures accompanying letters cannot be returned.

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If you're starting to think about which shrubs would look — and survive — best in your garden, then *The Gardening Which? Guide to Successful Shrubs* is the book for you. Beautifully illustrated throughout, and packed with invaluable information, it tells you everything you need to make the right choices for your garden.

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Riper with the years

Derwent May hails half a century of Penguin Classics

Some readers are going to get a frisson of nostalgia when they go into a bookshop this weekend. They will see on the shelves the cover — pale brown with a blue ship on it — of E. V. Rieu's translation of *The Odyssey*, which launched the Penguin Classics series 50 years ago.

Penguin Books has brought out a facsimile of this epoch-making book, at £5, as part of its anniversary celebrations for the series. Rieu had begun his translation before the Second World War, and finished it in 1944 to the sound of V1 and V2 explosions — "an accompaniment," he said, "which would have chimed in better with the more warlike *Iliad*."

The Odyssey proved, however, to be the book of the peace. As the Penguin historian, Steve Hare, has said, the story of Odysseus "perfectly summed up the difficulties faced by thousands returning home to people and places that might be almost forgotten."

But there was more to its success than that. Penguin books had become close companions of innumerable people during the war, both cheering them up and feeding a new longing for knowledge. So when *The Odyssey* came out, as the first of a new series that promised to bring the great foreign classics to the man in the street in fresh, readable and accurate translations, there was a tremendous rush to buy it, and eventually it sold three million copies.

Rieu was appointed editor of the series, and soon new volumes translated by first-class writers were flowing in. Robert Graves asked if he could do Apollonius's *The Golden Ass*. ("The obscenity is not impossible by 1946 standards," he told Rieu). Dorothy Sayers did Dante. She wrote a verse to be pinned up at the book-binders, to prevent them mixing up the sheets with those of other books:

*The title of the book you have to bind
Is THE INFERNO —
please bear this in mind;
The English word is
HELL, so you will know
In case of doubt, exactly
where to go.*

Russian, Spanish, Norwegian and Far Eastern classics, among others, soon joined the list, and in 1966

the Penguin English Library was started as a sister series. Pelican Classics — new editions of important books on philosophy, history and politics — and the Penguin American Library completed the picture, and all four series were merged under the name Penguin Classics in 1986. By now the series was known as "the black classics" because of the unmistakable black or black-panelled covers.

To mark this year's fiftieth anniversary, a whole new batch of volumes has just appeared. A particularly striking new group is *The Psalms in English*, *Virgil in English* (both £8.99), *Homer in English* and *Horace in English* (both £9.99). *The Psalms*, for example, has a brilliant introductory essay by its editor, the late Donald Davie, investigating the original character of the psalms, and wittily but sympathetically bringing out the way English translators have Christianised them. The sturdy collection of English versions ranges from Sir Thomas Wyatt to Thomas Hardy and ends with the translator who Davie says will be "most influential in the foreseeable future", David L. Frost, 150 of whose versions are in the *Alternative Service Book*.

The other three volumes are equally wide-ranging, and *Horace* also includes English poems that have been decisively influenced by Horace (concluding with one by Davie).

As a companion to Rieu's *Odyssey*, we now get Alexander Pope's verse *Iliad* (£16), which Samuel Johnson thought was "the greatest version of poetry the world has ever seen". All Pope's own notes are included. *Love-Letters between a Nobleman and His Sister*, an almost forgotten novel of adultery at Charles II's court by the Restoration dramatist Aphra Behn, is dusted down and given a new chance (£6.99).

Other names that beckon from the new list are Euripides, Chaucer, Anne Brontë, Jan Potocki, Kierkegaard and Lady Murasaki, who was tutor to the Empress of Japan 1,000 years ago. Penguin Books may have had its upheavals lately — but clearly it has not lost sight of its original ambitions.

Cookson's private recipe

The doyenne of popular women's fiction remains inimitable, says Helen Dunmore

■ THE UPSTART
By Catherine Cookson
Bantam Press, £16.99

■ THE DEVIL YOU KNOW
By Josephine Cox
Headline, £16.99

CATHERINE COOKSON has written more than 75 novels. She is a Dame of the British Empire, a publishing phenomenon, a woman of remarkable personal generosity and a writer whose compulsion to write is matched only by her readers' eagerness to consume.

Bought worldwide, televised, serialised, one title succeeds the next. They feed an appetite which demands the familiar. Readers want to be in Cookson Country, and they know its topography and characters as intimately as Cookson does.

Cookson novels are about hardship, the intractability of life and of individuals, the struggle first to survive and next to make sense of one's survival. Humour, toughness, resolution and generosity are Cookson virtues, in a world which

she often depicts as cold and violent. The scales are tipped against women, sexually and economically. Cookson's novels are weighted and driven by her own early experiences of illegitimacy and poverty. This is what gives them power, even when they are flawed by melodrama.

The Upstart is a family story without a shred of cosiness. Samuel

Fairbrother, a successful shoe manufacturer, is torn by inner conflict and is disastrous in his impact on his wife and children. Cookson's skill lies in portraying this man with sympathy and insight, while not softening his children's alienation.

Cookson Country, like *Coronation Street*, has the extreme likelihood of somewhere that does not exist and probably could never have existed. But we want to believe that it exists. Vera Duckworth bawls across the bar in her own never-never land, and Gran in *The Upstart* declares: "I'll put what adjectives I like to women of God, and to anybody else who

is as bloody tactless as she is."

To measure Cookson's achievement as a popular novelist, one has to look at her rivals. Josephine Cox, like Cookson, has a biography which is "as extraordinary as anything in her new novel, *The Devil You Know*, which contains five murders, two suicides, assorted assaults, illegitimacy and three weddings.

Much of the writing is formulaic and cliché-ridden. The plot turns on the flight to Blackburn of Sonny Fareham, who has discovered that her married lover is planning to impregnate her and then steal the baby for his barren wife. There is some carelessness in plotting. In an important scene Sonny goes alone to register her child, and Cox seems unaware that an unmarried woman



Cookson: a compulsion to write

cannot just name a man as father of her child when registering its birth without any supporting evidence.

There are hints of vigour and shrewdness in *The Devil You Know*, but on the whole its weaknesses point up the strengths of Cookson's storytelling. In the specialised world of women's popular fiction, Cookson has created her own territory.



Making a splash: Jacqueline and Caroline Kennedy at Hyannis Port, photographed by Mark Shaw, 1959, from *Life with Mother*, studies of mothers and their children, by the editors of *Life* magazine (Little, Brown, £9.99)

Hostages to their good fortune

■ SEESAW
By Deborah Moggach
Heinemann, £14.99

THIS is a big book cunningly disguised as a small one. Its monumental themes of sin, loss, catharsis and redemption are rich seams buried deep in a landscape which shifts from the somnolent suburbs to the litter-strewn streets of inner-city London. In between, the fortress of a happy life is dismantled brick by brick down to the barest, shabby frame.

Every page is a testament to the storyteller's skill at drawing you into the lives of her characters. As a consummate actor can make you forget that he is acting, Moggach's observations about the awkward, tangled self-consciousness of a teenage girl, the working mother's guilt, the anxiety of parenthood and, more impressively still, the complicated inner lives of her sad, little villains are so vivid and so true that you can forget that this is fiction. And yet this is artful fiction

indeed: the plot twists and turns and shocks like a knife plunging into a wound. Normal life for the Price family comes to an end at the beginning of the book, when they are the undeserving recipients of a free holiday to Florida, and their good fortune is captured by the local newspaper. Undeserving, because they are already so comfortably off: the large detached house; Hannah and Becky, the daughters, with their expensive education; Val, their interior designer mother, who keeps the fridge permanently stocked with Marks & Spencer's roulades; Morris, the angry Jewish husband with his beloved security firm.

They are extravagantly well-off, accord-

ing to Eva, the agent of their downfall, who kidnaps Hannah with the bumbling help of her lover, Jon. Without giving too much away, it is probably safe to say that the Prices' troubles only start with what should be the happy ending. There are some lovely writerly touches: the bushes with their sound "like soft little hands rubbing together"; Morris walking to the car, with the ransom money in a pair of supermarket bags, "weighed like a housewife with the price of his daughter".

It is the telling detail as much as the thrust of the drama which makes this book so compelling. As the story closes, Hannah learns to see fearfully, and a surprising coupling bears unexpected fruit in which lies the chance for renewal. Ripeness, we discover, is indeed all.

GINNY DOUGARY

King's Road conspirators

■ THE BIG KISS
By David Huggins
Picador, £12.99

THERE is something instinctively off-putting about a book which trumpets "hooray" from Stephen Fry on its dust jacket even before publication. Add a few lines of self-consciously literary smart talk from Will Self and the whole thing begins to smack suspiciously of a conspiracy in luridness. A thriller for the chattering classes, by the chattering classes, about the chattering classes.

Most of this world would seem completely alien to anyone who lives outside the Bermuda triangle of smart-set London, from Notting Hill to Soho and South Kensington. David Huggins's characters inhabit a demi-monde coloured by brand names: the Shogun, the Timberlands, the Beck's and the Marlboro Lights, where the name itself is enough to define both the product and the lifestyle. Great lines such as "hair so black you could imagine Stan Lee inking in a blue highlight" will mean little to those unfamiliar with the charms of vintage Marvel comics.

But people like Steve and Tony, Liz and Mary, Alan and Claire really do exist. There is a world of life or death in the design department, small-time entrepreneurs on the fringes of the big-time world of fashion and business that lies forever a step or two beyond the end of King's Road.

Huggins has done the politically correct — and increasingly accurate — thing, by making the hard financial hustlers female, relegating the men to a world of fragile egos and physical violence. Steve and Tony are classic failed flowers of the 1980s, unable to survive the hard knocks of the recession-prone 1990s and cannon fodder for the Machi-

vellian Alan and his corporate strategist, Sally.

Tony is a drunk: Steve is off his trolley, or at least going that way, aided and abetted by all around him. As his hip, middle-class idyll collapses, he begins to wonder whether he or the world around him is the madder. Is a daily dose of lithium better or worse than the occasional snort of "coke" or regular "weed" abuse? Not to mention other drugs, such



Huggins: local appeal

as handcuffs and black silk ties. The violence moves seamlessly from the psychological to the physical, culminating in a great blow-out of brutality, nicely relieved by an improbable deus ex machina. The Seventh Cavalry never practised *la fown* do.

This is an ephemeral little set piece but it is great entertainment if you are familiar with the landscape. Definitely one to be seen reading on the Central Line. If you are anyone who knows anyone.

PETER MILLAR

'An amazingly...
THE...
'Brave, talented...
and eloquent, this is a unique...
work — one that will live'

...
'Perfect'...
...
A N WILSON

A small masterpiece — enjoy...
...
superb observation

'A masterful novelist at the...
peak of his powers'
SCOTT

David Hughes
the little
book
HUTCHINSON
OUT NOW

She can seduce. She can love.
But can she kill?

Lisa
Appignanesi
a good
woman

'riveting, thrilling, sexy...
intelligent, unputdownable...
... a stylish piece of work
Evening Standard
'gripping... a lively
page-turner
Daily Telegraph
'this novel is a sure winner'
Evening Standard

Through a bottle, clearly

■ LEAVING LAS VEGAS
By John O'Brien
Pan, £4.99

JOHN O'BRIEN killed himself just before his novel, *Leaving Las Vegas*, was optioned for film. The fact that Ben, his protagonist, drinks himself to death — O'Brien, an alcoholic, shot himself — has led to much myth-making: the success of Mike Figgis's movie has brought the hype to a high pitch. Disappointment would seem inevitable.

But this is a fine, painful book. Its central characters, Ben and Sera, do not give a damn what the world thinks of them; the same could be said of the work as a whole. Ben is a drunk determined to drink until he dies. Sera, with whom he falls in love, is a prostitute: how she came to be what she is is unexplored.

This gives the novel the flat, gleaming surface of a relentless present, and what better setting than Las Vegas, where all that counts is the next dollar, the next drink, the next card out of the shoe?

The book pivots around Ben and Sera's relationship, though to call their friendship, where each accepts the other absolutely on their own terms, redemptive would be wrong. But so strongly does O'Brien impress their feelings upon the reader that the bitter resolution seems just right.

O'Brien's writing demands attention for its honesty. This is the way things are, it seems to say. Do not make judgments until you have been here. Despite the haze of sex and alcohol, this novel has a clear gaze indeed.

ERICA WAGNER

THE TIMES Martell invite you to a Grand National lunch

The Martell Grand National is the world's greatest steeplechase. To celebrate its fifth year of sponsorship, Martell Cognac is offering readers of *The Times* an exclusive invitation to a special gourmet luncheon.

Guests will have the choice of dining at either Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons or L'Ortolan, two of Britain's finest restaurants.

Both have created a special menu of four

courses for a memorable lunch, each one accompanied by a carefully chosen wine. After the leisurely lunch on Saturday, March 30, guests will watch the race on a large-screen television with a glass of Martell Cordon Bleu Cognac and special Martell Grand National chocolates.

Both restaurants have been awarded two Michelin stars.



LE MANOIR AUX QUAT' SAISONS
Marinated Red Mullet Fillets, layered in a purée of salted cod
Quail egg, spinach, parmesan and white ruffe ravioli in a poultry jus and medallies butter with Swiss chard
Roasted breast of Barbary duck, served with cherries in a cinnamon scented jus
Mascarpone ice cream and coffee-bean sauce

Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons, at Church Road, Great Milton, Oxfordshire offers the cuisine of Raymond Blanc, left. L'Ortolan, below, in Church Lane, Shinfield, Berkshire, is an elegant country restaurant set in an 18th-century vicarage and run by the award-winning team of Christine and John Burton-Race.

Tickets are £65 per person, including luncheon, wines, cognac, service and VAT. Numbers are strictly limited and applications will be treated on a first-come, first-served basis.



To reserve your place, send your name, address and daytime telephone number, together with a cheque payable to Times Newspapers Ltd to: The Times/Martell Grand National Luncheon, THF, 45 Islington Park Street, London N1 1QB.



BOOKS

7

NEW IN PAPERBACK



John Cole: revealing portraits of politicians in action

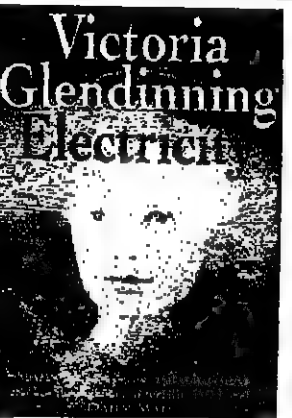
■ **AS IT SEEMED TO ME**
By John Cole
Phoenix, £7.99

THESE recollections of a life spent at the heart of British politics are firmly subtitled "political memoirs". Apart from the occasional, affectionate reference to "my long-suffering wife Madge", glimpsed from time to time in the background bringing up their four sons, John Cole reveals very little about his personal life.

This is not an impersonal book, however, for his enjoyment of the cut and thrust of politics and his appreciation of the people in it, rise from the page as clearly as they came across the airwaves in his unforgettable Ulster

voice during his years as Political Editor of the BBC. It is a voice of a man who is committed to rational debate, and who fears that we have lost our ability to address public affairs seriously. His description of his years on *The Guardian* — which he joined in 1956 and left as Deputy Editor in 1975 — make one realise how much the tone of journalism and of politics has changed since then.

Trusted and liked by Members of all parties, from Harold Wilson to John Major, Cole provides revealing close-ups of politicians in action, as well as an enjoyable self-portrait of a wily old newsman at work.



Victoria Glendinning: Electricity

■ **ELECTRICITY**
By Victoria Glendinning
Arrow, £5.99

GROWING up in London at the end of the 19th century, Charlotte Mortimer's world is conducted by convention. Peter Fisher marries her and takes her away to Hertfordshire, where he will be employed by the dashing Lord Godwin to wire his home for light. Glendinning's tale is a vibrant examination of a society in transition; parallels with the end of the 20th century spark and crackle.

■ **CASTING OFF**
By Libby Purves
Sceptre, £5.99

JOANNA GURNEY has nothing really dramatic to

complain about — it's just that, at 38, she's stifled by running her small-town cake shop, her kids take her for granted and her marriage, to a comfortable solicitor, seems passionless and desperately dull. So, one stormy afternoon, she impulsively commandeers the family's small sloop and embarks on her own solo voyage of discovery. What makes the book so compelling is Joanna's personality: thoughtful, determined and grudgingly humorous. A deeply satisfying read that more than matches Shirley Valentine or Joan Barfoot's *Gaining Ground*.

■ **REBEL HEARTS**
By Kevin Toolis
Penguin, £6.99

THE RESUMPTION of the IRA's bombing campaign has given this book a compelling timeliness. Toolis, a Republican sympathiser, has spent ten years reporting on the Troubles. The nationalist community trusts him and, as a result, he has come across many previous journalists to explaining why the "ceasefire" would never be permanent. Although you may recoil at the reverential portrayal of zealotry, the book evokes both pity and sorrow.

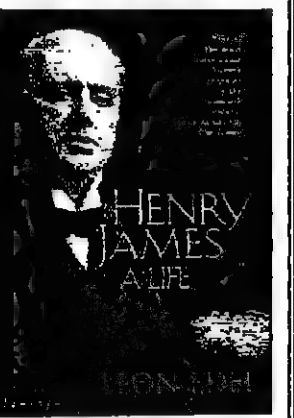


David Madseu: Memoirs of a Gnostic Dwarf

■ **MEMOIRS OF A GNOSTIC DWARF**
By David Madseu
Dedalus, £5.99

THE COURSE of Peppe the Dwarf's life in the slums of 16th-century Rome changes when he meets the beautiful Laura who teaches him the doctrine of Gnosticism — the theory that the Devil made the world and that man's true home is with God. After she is burnt for heresy his father stalks and finally kills her persecutor. Madseu's tale of how Peppe becomes the Pope's companion and is forced to choose between his master and his beliefs displays both erudition and a real storyteller's gift.

Hazel Leslie, Erica Wagner, Glyn Brown, Jason Cowley, Fiona Hook, Nicki Household



Henry James: Memoirs of a Gnostic Dwarf

■ **MEMOIRS OF A GNOSTIC DWARF**
By David Madseu
Dedalus, £5.99

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Hazel Leslie, Erica Wagner, Glyn Brown, Jason Cowley, Fiona Hook, Nicki Household

Raw chronicles of murderous evil do not help us to fathom its nature, Bernard Levin says

What is the mark of Cain?

LET US begin by asking, "Why are some of us good-natured and do nice things, and others apparently wicked and destructive?" I take it that the reader does not imagine that we will have found the answer before we close the book. But we can seek that elusive answer.

The baddies are immediately fingered as the culprits, because villains naturally act by aggression, but it needs only a few moments to see that that is a fallacy. Aggression has two sides: where would we be without leadership or independence? Did not Winston Churchill give us the strength to fight right through the fire? And could he have done so without aggression? For that matter, where would Richard Branson be without it?

Very well, aggression is essential. But it is not the only quality that is necessary; more to the point, where does aggression stop and change into something called "wicked and destructive"?

We take ordinary men and women, and find that we cannot distinguish between them when one is an entirely decent person and the other a murderer. Bad homes can and do breed good people, and good homes can breed the worst in wickedness. Genes, blood, intelligence, body — however we seek for the clue, it eludes us, and this book tries every possible avenue, yet you will close it no wiser than you started.

At that point, we meet really bad aggression: the two ten-year-olds who murdered the two-year-old James Bulger. He was "bludgeoned to death with bricks and an iron bar and his body left on a railway line to be cut in half". Yet the infant murderers had no idea that what they were doing was wicked; they had no idea of what wickedness was, or goodness either. But they were children, and we know better. Unfortunately, we cannot distinguish a murderer from someone who would not hurt a goldfish.

■ **THE EVIL THAT MEN DO**
By Brian Masters
Doubleday, £16.99

But there is another avenue, not yet fully explored. It is a disturbing one — not disturbing as in the awful killing of the boy, but disturbing in a much closer form. For the author of this book, Brian Masters, has written not one book about evil, but four: the one we are now discussing, three more which have had a very considerable success — *Killing for Company*, *The Shrine of Jeffrey Dahmer* and *Masters on Murder*. Nothing very odd in that, you may say; Masters is a remarkably prolific author. But there is, running just beneath the surface, what I can only call a hideous gloating, in *The Evil That Men Do*. "For a week or more, Michael moved Monika's corpse around the house, frequently talking to it ... Then ... left it there for five months ... dumped the body ... first taking Monika's head off so that he could keep it by him."

Here is another such story; Masters starts it by saying that "the reader should be warned" — a perfect come-on to make you turn immediately to something dreadful. Anyway ...

"Michael [not the first Michael] ... tore his wife's face apart with his bare hands. He pulled her eyes out of their sockets and tore her tongue from its roots ..."

There are many, many, such horrors in this book, let me give you just one more: "She was suspended naked from beams and whipped ... a wooden box was placed over her head ... she was locked in a larger box, where she defecated and urinated and became filthy. The man ... held her under water until she nearly drowned, taking photographs the while ..."

I am not trying to make you sick; I am trying to make the writer of this book see what he is doing. No doubt he will tell



Written all over their faces? Top (from left) Jeffrey Dahmer, Dennis Nilsen and Gary Gilmore; below, the abduction of James Bulger captured on a security video camera

us that these terrible things do happen, and he is only chronicling some of them. True; but that does not exculpate the juicy bits of such books.

For anyone with the smallest clue, the titles of those books should have rung bells; for Masters they did not. Indeed, in the book we are examining, the names of both Nilsen and Dahmer come up again and again and again and again; quotes from Nilsen and Dahmer are strewn through the book.

Naturally, Masters will — does — argue that the book is a scholarly work, and he is only

trying to winnow evil from good. It is true that he sprinkles goodness — for instance saints and the saintly. He is also knowledgeable in these matters, and some of the knowledge is new. And, certainly, he does want to find out why some of us are wicked and some good, though right to the end it eludes him, as it eludes everyone.

Perhaps I should not have stressed the very blood-curdling instances, not because the more gentle readers might faint, but because we have a story with not a scrap of blood or pain in it, but more horrible

than all the bloodstained and torture-filled ones — the Milgram experiment. You will find it on pages seven and eight, and I assure you that you will never forget it.

In the end, there is no answer, and it is not likely that there will ever be one. We have to leave it where the Gilmore family left it.

Two brothers, Gary and Frank Gilmore: Gary lived a life of crime and was finally executed; Frank lived a decent and peaceable life. Their mother said, "One son picked up the gun. The other did not pick up the gun. Why?"

Anatomy of a Japanese character

■ **AUDREY HEPBURN'S NECK**
By Alan Brown
Sceptre, £9.99

TOSHI OKAMOTO has a thing about American women. On his ninth birthday, he is taken to the cinema, where he falls in love with Audrey Hepburn. In contrast to the squat Japanese women he sees around him, the American with the long neck represents an alternative vision, not just of womanhood but of life.

Toshi's mother has already left the home and the bed she has shared with Toshi and his father since Toshi was born. No explanation is offered to Toshi from either of his parents, and he grows up confused and hurt, feeling guilty and responsible.

He flees to Tokyo while his father continues to run the family shop and his mother works at a nearby inn. Here, there is plenty to draw but "an absence of colour, like the insides of an enormous machine". He gets a job as a comic-book illustrator, befriends a gay American, Paul, and enters a relationship with his English tutor, Jane, who becomes obsessed with him. When Toshi finds himself out of his depth with Jane, he is forced to examine why he is so drawn to outsiders, with painful consequences.

Audrey Hepburn's Neck is a wonderful novel. Not only is it extraordinarily evocative of the mishmash of cultures and mores which is modern Japan, but it has the same qualities — reserve, restraint and underlying passion — of its central character. Toshi, and the two brilliantly reflect one another. Alan Brown captures, with great sensitivity, the isolation of a man whose best friend is a wealthy, gay American, whose girlfriends are always American, but whose parents do not speak to one another, nor to him, and who have offered him no hint of his own history. Gradually, Toshi realises that the Japan of his childhood is dying along with the Em-



Brown: sensitivity

peror, whose waning blood pressure is flashed in neon above the city. Americans come to Tokyo looking for something but, as Toshi points out, "everything foreigners like about Japan was already over before [he] was born". But Toshi, too, is looking, and eventually his search for love and a sense of identity reach an unexpected and profoundly moving climax.

This is a lovely book. It made me laugh, it made me cry, and it taught me lots I did not know about another country. You cannot ask much more of a novel.

MARY LOUDON

TIMES BOOKS

THURSDAY

The marital agonies of the British Royal Family: Alexander Chancellor on Queen Caroline; Robert Blake looks back at the Empire; the trouble with making it new: the British Council's latest anthology

The Times/Dillons Bestsellers

HARDBACK			List No.		Weeks	
1	KEN HOM'S HOT WOK BOOK Ken Hom (BBC)	£16.99	1	2		
2	PRIMARY COLORS Anonymous (Chart & Windus)	£16.99	0	1		
3	EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE Daniel Goleman (Bloomsbury)	£16.99	5	7		
4	ROGUE TRADER Nick Leeson (Little, Brown)	£16.99	0	1		
5	CROSS CHANNEL Julian Barnes (Cape)	£10.99	2	8		
6	BEACH MUSIC Pat Conroy (Doubleday)	£16.99	7	3		
7	X-FILES BOOK OF THE UNEXPLAINED Vol 1 Jane Goldman (Simon & Schuster)	£15.99	9	16		
8	SOPHIE'S WORLD Jostein Gaarder (Phoenix)	£16.99	0	30		
9	DELIA SMITH'S WINTER COLLECTION Delia Smith (BBC)	£15.99	6	20		
10	IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ENEMY Elizabeth George (Bantam)	£16.99	10	2		
PAPERBACK			List No.		Weeks	
1	TRAINSPOTTING Irvine Welsh (Minerva)	£6.99	1	27		
2	THE RAINMAKER John Grisham (Arrow)	£5.99	2	5		
3	SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS David Guterson (Bloomsbury)	£5.99	4	24		
4	THE STATE WE'RE IN Will Hutton (Vintage)	£7.99	6	9		
5	ACID HOUSE Irvine Welsh (Vintage)	£5.99	7	16		
6	LADDER OF YEARS Anne Tyler (Vintage)	£5.99	11	16		
7	REGENERATION Pat Barker (Penguin)	£6.99	9	3		
8	FINGERPRINTS OF THE GODS Graham Hancock (Mandarin)	£6.99	9	3		
9	THE EYE IN THE DOOR Pat Barker (Penguin)	£6.99	13	15		
10	ROUGH GUIDE TO THE INTERNET ed. A. J. Kennedy & M. Ellingham (Rough Guides)	£5	0	2		
11	MARABOU STORK NIGHTMARES Irvine Welsh (Vintage)	£5.99	0	5		
12	SOPHIE'S WORLD GREEK PHILOSOPHERS Jostein Gaarder & Paulette Moller (Phoenix)	£0.60	0	6		
13	THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (Phoenix)	£0.60	0	2		
14	SENSE AND SENSIBILITY Jane Austen (Bloomsbury)	£3.99	0	1		
15	A CELESTINE PROPHECY James Redfield (Bantam)	£7.99	14	15		
16	BRAVO TWO ZERO Andy McNab (Corgi)	£5.00	0	22		
17	THE JUROR George Dawes Green (Bantam)	£5.99	10	9		
18	A GUIDE TO HAPPINESS Epicurus (Phoenix)	£0.60	0	7		
19	THE RIDERS Tim Winton (Picador)	£5.99	0	1		
20	FREE TO TRADE Michael Ridpath (Mandarin)	£5.99	8	7		

Any book from this list can be ordered from Dillons Mail Order Tel: 0171 636 1577 Fax: 0171 580 7680 DILLONS

Deadlier than the Maelstrom

■ **DINA'S BOOK**
By Herbjørn Wassmo
Translated by Nadia M. Christensen
Black Swan, £6.99

NORWEGIAN bestseller opens on the edge of a precipice. It is a sunless morning, overshadowed by dark mountains. A wounded man on a sleigh is about to be pushed to his death by a woman. These first few paragraphs prefigure much of what is to come: ruthless and elemental female protagonist; nature at its bleakest and most dominant; simple, direct language broken down into unrelentingly short sentences. It is as well to decide straight away whether you like this kind of thing, for a further 527 pages follow.

Set in the more monochrome reaches of the northern Norwegian coast in the middle of the last century, against a rather incidental background of the Crimean War, it is the story of a thoroughly dangerous woman inclined to destroy every man who comes near her via sexual domination.

There is clearly a high personal price to be paid for such misdeeds, however, as heroine Dina spends a lot of time in a wolfskin coat getting drunk and howling in the middle of the night. Lugging around a substantial baggage of ghosts seems to be par for

the course in Norway — must be those endless winters.

This is more Nordic brutality than magic realism: Dina's incorporeal visitors are those whose deaths she has caused, wilfully or otherwise, notably her mother, who was flayed alive by boiling lye and screamed for an entire day before dying.

The cycle of life on the isolated coastal estate is evocatively described: the visiting merchants, the trading trips up the coastline, the seasonal household tasks. The monotony they all endure is great, but there is plenty of bareback riding, bear hunting and salty sea voyages to stop the book from being depressing.

Wassmo has a bold and forceful stride to her prose, with a positively Lawrencean intensity in her treatment of sex, death and nature which, like Lawrence, hovers somewhere between the compelling and the faintly hilarious. A veritable Scandinavian saga.

HARRIET PATERSON

'There are many imitators but this is the genuine article'

The Times

THE NUMBER ONE BESTSELLER
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OUR GAME

'Highly recommended ...le Carré's reading is unsurpassable'

Spectator

THE NUMBER ONE BESTSELLER
NOW ON AUDIO

NEW ON CD: Celine Dion overwrought; Gaillard's beguiling gab; Sibelius in the raw

POP SINGLE

David Sinclair

THE FRAMES D.C.

Monument, their debut single in Britain, is a churning rock track with a heavily syncopated bass line that has its provenance in the sound of the American grunge era rather than in the merry melodies of Britpop.

"I built a monument to every word that's passed between us," Hansard sings in a clear, hard voice that echoes the straining tones of Eddie Vedder, and like the Pearl Jam singer, Hansard sounds as if he means it.

Raw, rocky and unfashionably for real, this lot are undoubtedly going to be a force to be reckoned with.

POP ALBUM

David Sinclair

CELINE DION

Falling into You, Epic 457923. CELINE DION is one of those performers who start at treble forte and then work up to a climax (see also Meat Loaf, Bonnie Tyler). True to form, this new album is a marathon

of melodrama, which establishes a typically overwrought tone from the start with a thunderous Jim Steinman epic, *It's All Coming Back To Me Now*.

A small army of songwriters and producers, including Diane Warren, Jean Jacques Goldman and Aldo Nova, furnish her with a certain amount of musical variety — from the pop-reggae rhythm of *Make You Happy* to the slinky soul groove of *Dreamin' of You* — but the feverish pitch is unwavering.

The album's one and only theme is the love of a good man: how to find it, how to win it, how to keep it. "I will fight, I will bleed/I will lay down my life, if that's what you need," she vows in *If That's What It Takes*. "A mountain of stone, a door of steel can't stand in my way," she insists in *I Don't Know*.

Dion's problem lies not so much in the technical detail, which is faultless, as in her lack of credibility. All the songs are in the same emotional key, and the impression that she is going through the motions is reinforced by her choice of supper-club standards such as *River Deep*, *Mountain High* and *Natural Woman*.

A little Celine Dion goes a long way, and while there will be a lot of hits from this album, it is asking too much to swallow it all in one sitting.

JAZZ

Clive Davis

SLIM GAILLARD

Anytime. Anyplace. Anywhere, Hep Jazz CD-2020. YES, it is ungainly in parts. And, yes, the journey through the byways of Britain on *Everything's OK in the UK* feels more like a world tour. Nevertheless this 1982 jam session in London has all the eccentric flair of one of Slim Gaillard's well-travelled zoot suits.

Inventor of "vout", the impenetrable jive vocabulary

NEW ON VIDEO: Chekhov down under; Kathy Bates under suspicion; pre-blacklist Polonsky

COUNTRY LIFE

High Fliers, 15, 1994. MICHAEL BLAKEMORE'S film — by turns charming, melancholy and boisterous — takes the plot of *Uncle Vanya* and plunks it down on an Australian farm after the First World War. Chekhov's ageing professor is now a London theatre critic played by Blakemore himself, who returns to his homestead with a new, bored wife. Upheaval follows. Blakemore is not interested in Merchant-Ivory finesse, and some of his strokes are broad. But apart from Greta Scacchi's routine flirt, the actors carry the film easily from mood to mood. Available to rent.

DOLORES CLAIBORNE

Columbia TriStar, 18, 1995. TAYLOR HACKFORTH'S stylish version of Stephen King's novel about a wife and mother twice suspected of murder looks beyond questions of guilt or innocence to probe the characters' tortured lives, with images to match. But towering over the atmospheric visuals stands Kathy Bates's powerful performance as the hardbitten sorority, survivor of an abusive husband, who now stands accused of murdering the woman she keeps house for. Available to rent.

FORCE OF EVIL

Second Sight, PG, 1949. MESMERISING and brilliant thriller about New York racketeers, made by the short-lived Enterprise Studios, which was dedicated to the off-beat. Writer-director Abraham Polonsky took justified pains over the pungent, poetic dialogue. The gritty images have their own poetry, and there are memorable performances from John Garfield (a racketeer's lawyer with



Outback blues: Greta Scacchi and Sam Neill star in *Country Life*. Chekhov transplanted to Australia

sullied ideals), Thomas Gomez and Beatrice Pearson. A few years later, the black cloud of the blacklist descended, and Polonsky did not direct again until 1969.

NOTHING BUT THE BEST

Lumiere, PG, 1964. HOME GROWN comedies with fangs are not exactly ten a penny, but this one digs deep into the lifeblood of 1960s Britain, ruthlessly exploring the class system and the success itch. Alan Bates's estate-agent's clerk races

to the top by hook, crook and murder after learning the ropes from Denholm Elliott. Director Clive Donner and scriptwriter Frederic Raphael ensure the satire is fast, barbed and, above all, funny. Colour photograph by Nicolas Roeg.

THE YOUNG POISONER'S HANDBOOK

PolyGram, 15, 1995. ASSURED but depressing black comedy based on the true story of Graham Young, a north London

schoolboy who subjects his family to experiments with toxic substances. Though Master Graham is bundled off to a hospital for the criminally insane, his poisonous career continues. So does the film: and any delight at the firm grip of director Benjamin Ross or Hugh O'Connor's performance slowly vanishes. Ross probably did not mean his first feature to be this nasty; but overkill has made it so. Available to rent.

GEOFF BROWN

OPERA

John Higgins

DONIZETTI

La Fille du régiment, Gruberova/Laghezza/van der Walt/Fourcade/Munich Radio Orchestra/Panni. Nightingale NCD0566-2. BEFORE the arrival of this Nightingale set, only one complete version of Donizetti's rousing military comedy remained in the catalogue, the Decca version with Sutherland and Pavarotti made almost 30 years ago. Marie, regimental "daughter" and mascot, found abandoned on the battlefield as a

baby, is a gift to any soprano ready to unbutton a bit. Donizetti announces her arrival with a snatch of off-stage coloratura, but thereafter she has the habit of interrupting every song with a raptorial in praise of Napoleon's 21st Grenadiers. Marie may turn out to be of noble birth for the sake of the plot, but she is tomboy through and through. Sutherland gave a thigh-thumping performance. Edit Gruberova shows similar zest. Her voice has a tendency to harden at times, but she has plenty of high spirits and the coloratura is faultless. Deon van der Walt is Tonio, the Tyrolean who saves Marie from falling over a cliff, then joins the 21st to win her hand. Van der Walt does not flip out the multitude of top notes in the way Pavarotti did, but he gives a graceful performance, as does Philippe Fourcade as the French Sergeant, Sulpice, a properly saintly figure. Rosa Laghezza is distinctly unsuitably as the Marquise de Berkenfeld, who turns out to be Marie's mum. Marcello Panni draws lively playing from the Munich orchestra in this short score, which has no dud numbers and many familiar ones. How long before the 21st storms into a British theatre again?

ORCHESTRAL

Barry Millington

SIBELIUS

Symphony No 5: En saga, Lahti Symphony Orchestra/Vänsk. BIS CD-800. VOLUME 38 of the *Complete Sibelius* series from the Swedish label BIS offers world premiere recordings of two familiar works in unfamiliar versions. The Fifth Symphony received its first performance in December 1915, but the composer was not satisfied and a second version was prepared for the following

December. Even so, the symphony took three more years to reach its final form.

The differences between the original version of 1915 (recorded here) and the final one of 1919 (that generally performed) are both startling and instructive. Originally the first movement was cast in two separate ones, and there are numerous other differences, of which the most obvious are the opening (no horn call) and the end (the hammerblows far less dramatic).

In every respect, the familiar, final version is preferable. Nevertheless, it is good to have the original version on disc — very competently performed by the Lahti Symphony Orchestra under Osmo Vänskä.

Similarly, the original (1892) version of *En saga* is rawer in the elaboration of its material, yet that primitiveness is integral to the conception of the piece. New life for an invaluable musical document.

CHAMBER

Hilary Finch

BACH

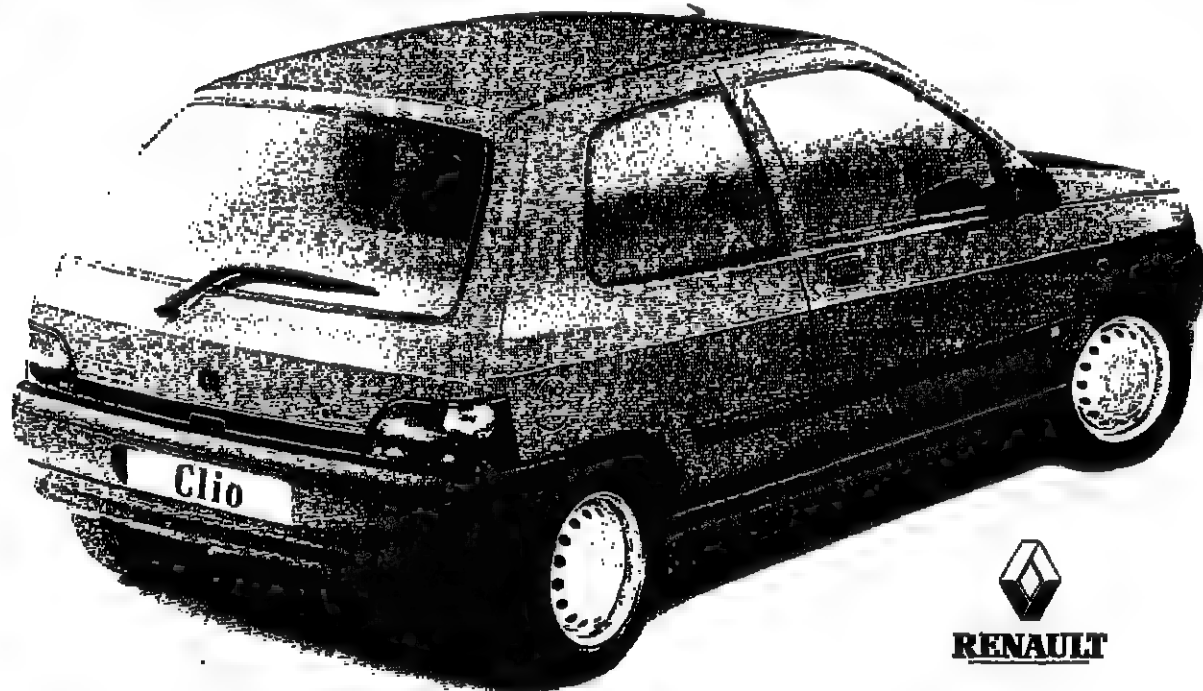
Partita and Suites, Maria João Pires. DG 447 894-2. MARIA JOAO PIRES'S piano playing is primarily for herself: we, the listeners, eavesdrop. So the keyboard suites of Bach, never intended for public performance, are just the thing for her.

The *Praeludium* of the great Partita No 1 in B flat fills itself into being at such an even, gentle pace that it sounds as if the music were always there, just waiting to drift into the earshot of the listener. Pires turns the *Prelude* of the English Suite No 3 in G minor into a full-blown Vivaldi-style concerto, solo and "orchestral" voices stamped out in bold, decisive forms. She delights in the rhythmic ambiguities of the following dance movements, with the Sarabande a slow, introverted meditation on its own harmonic language. The final French Suite No 2 in C minor recreates in lucid converse the simplicity born of considerable revision by Bach. Not to be missed.

* Worth hearing
** Worth considering
*** Worth buying

THE TIMES HAS JOINED WITH RENAULT AND EMI TO HELP RAISE MONEY FOR TOMMY'S CAMPAIGN

A perfect gift for parents



Win a Renault Clio

RENAULT UK is linking up with *The Times* to offer all our readers the chance to win a fabulous Clio and 50 runners-up prizes of EMI's new compilation CD *Baby Love*, produced on behalf of Tommy's Campaign.

Renault has adopted Tommy's Campaign as its official charity in 1996 and the Clio RL Primo, worth £8,000, is being given to a lucky *Times* reader in our prize draw to demonstrate the car company's support for the charity.

The Clio RL has established itself as a car for the young in years and spirit. It is racy but safe, affordable yet with a

touch of class. And it has a long list of features which make life more pleasant: internally adjustable door mirrors, a stereo radio cassette player and, more importantly, those which keep you safe and sound, such as side impact protection bars, seat belt pre-tensioners and lockable safety head restraints.

The Clio RL has easy handling, good roadholding and sure-fire braking. It also has low running costs with the bold good looks and flair generally associated with this marque. The Clio's colours are an attractive choice of: glacier white, cobalt blue, capsicum red,

larch green, Corfu blue, Xerus grey and iceberg silver.

HOW TO ENTER

All you have to do is collect four of the six tokens from this week's *Times*. The overall winner and 50 runners-up will be chosen at random from all entries received by the closing date, Monday, March 25, 1996. Post your tokens to the address on the coupon below. No purchase is necessary and a token request address will be published later this week.

Readers of *The Times* can support Tommy's Campaign, a national charity dedicated to the birth of healthy babies, by buying a new CD called *Baby Love*. It costs £12.99 and 80 per cent of the net profits are going to the charity.

The compilation is made up of timeless love songs which can convey the bond between a parent and child. There are 18 tracks including John Lennon's *Beautiful Boy*, Dire Straits' *Walk of Life*, Sinead O'Connor's *All Babies* and Mark Knopfler's *Notting Hillbillies* with *I Feel Like Going Home*.

Baby Love would make a perfect Mothering Sunday gift, or a special present for parents on the birth of a new baby. But equally it will appeal to anyone who wants to support a charity which helps babies to be born healthy and strong.

All the artists on the compilation have agreed to waive their royalties as their contribution to this popular cause and Sainsbury's and Savacentre are donating £1 from the sale of every CD and cassette in their 240 stores to the charity. *Baby Love* is also available at all Our Price and Virgin stores, WH Smith and Woolworths. It costs £12.99 rrp (a cassette is £8.99).

For more information about Tommy's Campaign, please call: 0171-620 2654.

Baby Love track listing

1. Chris Rea *Julia*
2. Whitney Houston *The Greatest Love of All*
3. John Lennon *Beautiful Boy*
4. Elton John *Blessed*
5. Simply Red *For Your Babies*
6. Diana Ross *Let's Make Every Moment Count*
7. Beverley Craven *Mollie's Song*
8. Paul McCartney *Once Upon a Long Ago*
9. Kate Bush *The Man with the Child in his Eyes*
10. The Notting Hillbillies *I Feel Like Going Home*
11. Pretenders *Kid*
12. Paul Weller *Moon on your Pyjamas*
13. The Police *Every Breath You Take*
14. World Party *All I Care*
15. Sinead O'Connor *All Babies*
16. Robert Palmer *She Makes My Day*
17. Bryan Ferry *Is Your Love Strong Enough?*
18. Dire Straits *Walk of Life*



Help to save a baby

The birth of a baby can be one of life's most fulfilling and happy events. Yet, for an unacceptable number of parents, the experience can bring heartache.

In the UK 40,000 babies are born too soon or too small every year; one in four women suffer the trauma of a miscarriage and one in 150 babies are lost through stillbirth. These figures have remained relatively unchanged for the past 50 years.

Premature babies account for one in seven births. The more severely premature, often weighing no more than a bag of sugar, spend the first few weeks in an incubator, fighting for their lives. Sadly, some do not survive and others may suffer some permanent disability such as cerebral palsy or breathing problems.

There have been enormous advances in the last few years into the care of premature babies but there remains a

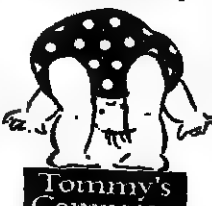
pressing need to discover the causes of the problem in the first place.

Tommy's Campaign was set up in 1992 to raise money for research into this complex area. A wide range of projects are now being funded by the charity into the causes of prematurity, miscarriage and stillbirth.

Lucilla Poston, of St Thomas's hospital, London, professor of fetal health for the Tommy's Campaign, leads a team of researchers who work in collaboration with other medical institutions nationwide.

The money raised from the sale of *Baby Love* will help to ensure that Tommy's Campaign continues in its quest to bring an end to the suffering.

You can help to give all babies a better start in life by sending a donation to: Tommy's Campaign, London SE9 6RD. Or calling: 0171-620 2654. Registered charity No. 1001362



YOU CAN MAKE A DONATION TO TOMMY'S CAMPAIGN BY CREDIT CARD ON 0171-620 2654

PROPERTY

9

Study the farm before picking a winner

A canter round studs on the market in Europe and beyond

Breeding horses is a rich man's game. It takes luck, as well as money and experience, to produce a horse that will win one of the classics and earn a fortune.

The bloodstock covering season runs from February to July, during which time a stallion can cover at least 40 to 50 mares. The fee for his services ranges from £500 to £25,000, depending on his race record and breeding background.

The secret of a good stud lies in the soil: free-draining limestone fed by its own spring water, with the right nutrients, especially calcium, produce prize-winning horses and foals. Add well-sheltered paddocks and you have an excellent breeding environment.

The most famous studs in this country are around Newmarket, where soil conditions are ideal. Other well-known areas include the Cotswolds and Yorkshire.

Expect to pay £2,500 to £4,000 an acre for developed stud land, plus the value of house and buildings, says Rupert Sweeting of Knight Frank. "You need four to five acres for each horse but there must be enough land to allow paddocks to recover," he says.

One of the most famous studs to come on the market in recent years is Warren Park in Newmarket, previously owned by Captain Marcos Lemos, who sold to Gerald Carroll about four years ago.

Warren Hill and Ashley Heath studs, brought together by Captain Lemos to form Warren Park, have produced winners of almost all the classics, including Julio Mariner, winner of the 1978 St Leger, and

Pebbles, who won the 1984 1,000 Guineas before being sold to Sheikh Mohammed.

Warren Park is now being sold by the receivers through Knight Frank for £3.8 million and includes the nine-bedroom Warren Hill House, with two staff flats, indoor pool and tennis courts, surrounded by gardens and 300 acres of stud land with four yards. Currently run as one stud, it has the scope to work as two main yards.

Warren Hill has 16 loose boxes, foaling boxes and covering yard, workshop, offices and orangery. Ashley Heath includes a manager's house, seven cottages, two stallion boxes, foaling and loose boxes, covering yard and various administrative buildings.



Warren Park, at Newmarket, built in the style of a French chateau, is on sale for £3.8 million and combines the two yards of Warren Hill and Ashley Heath studs

Agents Jackson, Staps & Staff are selling Swettenham Hall Estate in Cheshire, on offer at £2 million. The Swettenham Stud originated here with well-known horses such as Gildoran, winner of the Ascot Gold Cup in 1984 and '85, owned by racing tycoon Robert Sangster, who sold the property to the present owner ten years ago. The 176-acre estate, no longer a stud, comprises an eight-bedroom, Grade II-listed house, farmhouse, cottage, pool,

outbuildings and two stable blocks with 42 loose boxes.

A smaller stud, the Manor House at Ab Kettleby, near Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, is for sale at £390,000, through John D. Wood. The present owner, James Burridge, bred and reared Desert Orchid on the property. The five-bedroom, Grade II-listed house comes with nine loose boxes and 13.4 acres of gardens and paddocks. The strong Irish Bavour at new week's Cheltenham Festival is a reminder of the strength of horse-breeding in the Republic. The Curragh, near the famous racecourse west of Dublin, is sought-after and expensive, priced from £4,000 to £5,000 an acre for undeveloped stud land. County Tipperary also has free-draining limestone land from £3,000 an acre. Studs in these areas are in short supply, particularly at the top of the market. Elsewhere, a small stud can be had for under £200,000, but the majority sell for between £400,000 and £800,000.

About 53 miles from Dublin, on the east coast of County Wexford, Boreagh Manor is available for around £1 million through Jackson Staps McCabe. Its most famous horse was Hardy Canute, whose descendants include Shirley Heights, winner of the English and Irish Derbies in 1978. The price

includes a seven-bedroom Georgian house in 160 acres of parkland with 70 acres of sheltered paddocks. It has its own stream, ornamental lake, 20 loose boxes, and two cottages.

In France, the Orne region of Normandy is prime horse-breeding country, with many famous studs, including the splendid Haras-du-Pin National Stud. There are plenty of studs for sale but few buyers, so most vendors will negotiate.

Prices start at £121,000, which will buy a stud in 24 acres with 19 loose boxes, various stable blocks, and a 19th-century "maison de maître", through Barbers.

Moving upmarket, Le Haras du

Gazon, in 239 acres, between Argentan and Falaise, can be yours for just over £1 million, through Christopher Stephenson International. Once owned by the Comte de Montesson, it was sold in recent years to a Japanese family, who turned it into a combined stud and recreation area. Its most famous horse, Katko, has won the Grand Steeple de Paris three times.

This stud has a ten-bedroom, 18th-century manor house, stable yard with restaurant, conference area with 11 bedrooms, a cottage, 57 loose boxes, lunging ring, outdoor arena, tennis court and lake.

Under warmer skies, you could buy one of South Africa's most renowned stud farms — the Aldora Stud in KwaZulu, Natal — for

£600,000, through Knight Frank. The mares, foals and yearlings are also available separately. Grade I winners bred here include Fast Break, Secret Rites and Muscovy. The price includes 502 acres of prime land, manager's house, three secondary houses, 11 cottages, farm school, 100 loose boxes, four stallion boxes and foaling unit.

CHERYL TAYLOR

Barbers, 0171-221 0555; Christopher Stephenson International, 01672 521155; Knight Frank 0171-629 8171; Jackson, Staps & Staff 01244 338361; Jackson Staps McCabe 00 3 531 071177; John D. Wood, 01865 311522.

Grand National lunch, Page 6

A home beside the turf

HORSE LOVERS would be in their element with one of the houses being built at the Mount Juliet Country Club, overlooking the River Nore in Co Kilkenny, the horse-breeding heart of the Irish Republic.

There are plans to build 61 luxury houses on the 1,400-acre Mount Juliet estate, which includes the Ballylinch Stud Farm. The stud has produced winners of all the Irish and English classics, including The Tetrarch, described as "the fastest horse in the history of the turf", who won seven classic races in England and Ireland in 1913. He subsequently sired a line of classic winners.

Residents may board mares at the stud, or they can join a bloodstock syndicate. The complex includes an equestrian centre and 16 miles of bridle paths for trekking.

Six sites have been sold, each costing £150,000, and three houses built. The three-quarter of an acre sites, in a mature woodland setting, back onto an 18-hole golf course designed by Jack Nicklaus. Properties must be built to specifications laid down by Mount Juliet, and the total cost for building a three to four-bedroom house, including land, will be £450,000 to £550,000.

Details: Patrick Hegarty, Mount Juliet Properties (00 3 53 5624455).



LONDON W8
Edwards Square

In excellent order, an elegant west facing Georgian house with lovely views over the communal square gardens.

5 bedrooms, dressing area, 3 bedrooms, 3 reception rooms, kitchen/conservatory, utility room, cloakroom, garden, access to square gardens.

Freehold

Price Guide: £1,350,000

KENSINGTON:
0171-727 0705

LONDON SW4
Clapham Common Northside

Set back behind a gravelled drive, an elegant house with flexible accommodation and lovely views over Clapham Common.

5 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, shower room, nursery kitchen, 2 reception rooms, large kitchen, self-contained flat, 27m (90ft) garden.

Freehold

Price Guide: £765,000

BATTERSEA:
0171-225 0174

LONDON SW19
Wimbledon Village

Circa 1860, a charming detached house with a self-contained cottage, in the heart of the village.

4 bedrooms, dressing room, 2 bathrooms, cloakroom, 2 reception rooms, study, kitchen. Cottage with 2 bedrooms, bathroom, sitting room and kitchen. Courtyard garden, roof terrace, parking.

Freehold

£575,000

WIMBLEDON:
0181-944 7172

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KENT - Doddington Price Guide: £550,000

A fine listed house with a coach house and attractive gardens adjoining farmland. 5 beds, 4 baths, 3 secondary beds, 3 recep, conservatory, domestic offices. Coach house with kit, shower, rm, games rm, billiards rm, garaging, stabling, tennis ct, paddock. Just under 2.02 ha (5 acres).

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GLOUCESTERSHIRE - Near Tetbury Price Guide: £195,000

In a traditional Cotswold hamlet surrounded by glorious countryside, a detached period cottage with good sized reception rooms, 3 double bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 reception rooms, cloakroom, kitchen, garaging, south facing walled garden.

CIRENCESTER: 01285 642244

HAMPSHIRE
Sway

A pretty listed 17th century farmhouse, about one mile from the open forest.

3/4 bedrooms, 2 baths, 2 reception rooms, study/bed 4, kit, b'fast rm, double garage, stable block, garden and orchard. About 0.16 ha (0.4 acre).

Price Guide: £225,000

LYMINGTON:
01590 677233

HAMPSHIRE
Headley Village

Quietly situated near Headley Green, a newly refurbished early Victorian house with a detached s/c cottage, 3 double beds, bath, 3 recep, kitchen with Aga, utility, cloak, cellar, 1 bed cottage, garage block with studio/store above. Part walled garden. About 0.2 ha (0.5 acre).

Price Guide: £210,000

FARNHAM:
01252 737115

EAST SUSSEX
Crowborough

With superb views, a cottage of character in a rural position close to the Golf Course.

4/5 beds, 2 baths, 3 recep, kit, utility rm, garaging, garden, swimming pool. About 0.3 ha (0.75 acre).

JSA: Freeman Forman 01825 766636

Offers invited in excess of £350,000

EAST GRINSTEAD:
01342 326326

OXFORD
Harcourt Hill

In about 4.45 ha (11 acres), a well appointed house with views over the Oxford spires and Chilterns.

5 beds, 2 dressing rms, 4 baths, shower rm, 4 recep, extensive domestic offices, gymnasium/office, s/c annex with bed, bath, recep, kit. Dble garage.

Price Guide: £600,000

OXFORD:
01865 311522

Sale fails to blossom in daffodil country

Hawk How was inherited by the present owners who are under no pressure to sell, but the property is in that misty area at the top end of the market where tens of thousands of pounds may separate the asking price and what is realisable. The sellers have dropped the price to £395,000, which represents excellent value for such a property.



Britain lies only two valleys away. Even so, rental from the cottage in the grounds of Hawk How as a holiday home could be expected to be nearly £12,000 a year and Mr Blue reckons that, with well-aimed marketing, rental from the house and cottage would together yield more than £25,000 a year.

Until last year, the upper end of the market was moving freely, with good demand and sales relatively easy to achieve. Things have changed, even though the recession in house sales is supposed to be easing," he says.

Cash buyers, as ever, hold the strongest hand to negotiate a deal and, with expensive properties, have won substantial discounts. But buyers in the Cumbrian market are proving to be selective and keen to test the vendor's eagerness to sell, so that negotiations can take on the air of a poker game.

A number of sales in the £300,000 region have been achieved this year but took longer than in years past. With the property market coming out of its winter hibernation, sellers, like Wordsworth's daffodils, are hoping for a sunny breakthrough.

● **Penrith Farmers & Kidds,**
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Locations.

THE SUNDAYTIMES
Rural Living

A unique supplement focusing on the country property market will accompany The Sunday Times on March 14th with advertising features and informative editorial concentrating on the rural life.

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We are a small but long established family firm of medical herbalists. 70% of our sales derive from repeat orders, and the recommendation of existing customers. If for any reason you are not 100% satisfied with either our products or our service then we guarantee to refund your money in full by return of post, without quibble or question.

CATARRH

THE 100 NEW SYMPTOMS CAN NOW BE RELIEVED WITH THIS AMAZING HERBAL FORMULA

- CONGESTION • TEMPORARY DEAFNESS
- BALANCE • DIFFICULT BREATHING
- HEADACHE • SINUS PAIN
- NASAL BLOCKAGE • DISTURBED SLEEP
- COUGHING • DISCOMFORT, etc., etc.

Every person who suffers knows what a misery catarrh can be. But now there is a simple, easy way in which every catarrh sufferer can take effective action. Newtons' Traditional Remedies' herbal catarrh tablets will relieve all of the 'big ten' catarrh symptoms. This amazing herbal medicine has worked for thousands of catarrh sufferers, why not let it work for you too. Just read below what actual users of the tablets say then decide for yourself whether you can afford not to try this remarkable herbal medicine.

These tablets dissolve quickly, then circulate throughout the entire body, meeting your catarrh 'head on' to relieve symptoms wherever they are to be found. It's no wonder that this is one of our most popular remedies. People who try these remarkable tablets tend to stay with them. Reach for them whenever catarrh strikes. Why not order a course of these tablets now and discover why so many, many of our regular customers prefer our catarrh tablets.

READ WHAT OUR CUSTOMERS THINK

"I thought you would like to know that after a course of your catarrh tablets, the symptoms which I have had since as long as I can remember (I am 77 years old) have been completely relieved and I am now completely free of catarrh." J. M. Smith, 11.1.96

"Many thanks for the catarrh tablets and a bottle of your catarrh tablets. I have been suffering from catarrh for many years and I have been told that I will never be free of it. I have now had your catarrh tablets for 10 days and I am now completely free of catarrh." J. M. Smith, 11.1.96

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RHEUMATIC PAIN

AMAZING HERBAL FORMULA

DELIVERS PAIN RELIEF HEAD TO TOE

JOINTS • MUSCLES • LIGAMENTS • BACK

NECK • SHOULDER • LEGS • ARMS

FEET • TOES • WRIST • FINGERS, ETC.

If you suffer rheumatic pain anywhere in your body you should be aware of an amazing herbal tablet which right now is relieving the pain for thousands and thousands of sufferers.

These remarkable tablets are made from whole plants and herbs (including willow, stems and roots), so they contain not just the active medicinal ingredients but also a broad spectrum of additional salts and minerals, together with numerous trace elements extracted from the earth's soil. As herbals we are convinced that it is this huge diversity of natural elements that makes this remedy so wonderfully different. The tablets dissolve quickly, then circulate throughout your entire body, relieving your pain. Don't just take our word for their effects. Read below what our customers say.

We have numerous testimonials on file and every post brings us similar letters of thanks and repeat orders. We invite you to discover for yourself how this remarkable herbal formula could relieve your pain and improve your life. Order a course today. These amazing tablets really could work for you too!

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SEE WITH YOUR OWN EYES HOW THOSE EXCESS INCHES MELT NATURALLY AWAY

BE SLIMMER, SEXY, ALLURING, ATTRACTIVE

THINNER THIGHS - HIPS - BUTTOCKS - LEGS ETC...

USE THIS AMAZING PROGRAM FOR 7 DAYS • SEEING IS BELIEVING • 100% SATISFACTION OR YOUR MONEY BACK

• NO STARVATION DIETING • STEADY, EASY WEIGHTLOSS • SAFE HERBAL FORMULA

TESTED BY 1,000'S OF CUSTOMERS • REPEAT ORDERS, LETTERS OF THANKS ARRIVE DAILY

VISIBLE - SEEABLE RESULTS IN SEVEN DAYS OR YOUR MONEY BACK

This fabulous herbal slimming programme could be the most EFFECTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL way of reducing your weight that you have tried yet. It's growing in popularity daily, and it's no wonder... Specifically designed for people who may have found weightloss difficult in the past, it makes slimming SAFE, PLEASANT, PAINLESS AND SO, SO EASY.

It consists of a SPECIAL MEDICINAL HERBAL TABLET which you must take three times a day at your usual meal times with the recommended dose of water. Numerous other similar success stories are on file and every post brings letters of thanks from grateful customers. Fill out the order form right away or place your order by phone and you'll soon see those excess inches START TO MELT AWAY! Do it now. If you are serious about losing weight this is an opportunity that you really shouldn't miss.

YOU'VE DREAMED ABOUT IT NOW YOU CAN DO IT

Please note that this programme is for the specific use of overweight people only. It is suitable for direct use by mail order for callers welcome at our central dispensary.

Discontinue its use when you reach your desired weight, and do not try to lose weight too quickly. If you are not in good health, or you are in any doubt about the weight you should be in relation to your height and build then we strongly advise you to consult your GP before using the programme.

Big discounts on brand-name goods are available — if you know where to look

For designer jewellery, page 33 lists Steinberg & Tolkein (0171-376 3660) in the King's Road, west

Dolls' clothes from Mrs Pickering's (01692 670407) just outside Great Yarmouth (page 341) are guaranteed by the owner "not to fall to bits straight away", and are available to fit popular dolls such



Purple Fish (01453 882820) in Stroud, Gloucestershire, on page 334, is a warehouse shop selling Spanish-made shoes, mainly leather, up to an adult size 8. In the

JENNAI COX

The Good Mail Order Guide (to be published this month by Macmillan, £9.99, available from bookshops). The guide lists more than 1,200 mail

order catalogue companies, according to product. Items available include button covers, dog cushions, flowers or tapestry tools. There is also an index at the back where companies can be looked up by name. *The Factory Shopping and Sightseeing Guide to the UK* to be published next month by the Good Deal Directory Company Ltd, £3.99, available from the address above left is the place to find value-for-money, brand-named items such as Royal Doulton, Barbour and Wedgwood, whilst sampling a taste of history and culture. It lists 1,600 factory shops, divided into nine regions, each with its own map, a description of local tourist sites and details of nearby factory shops.



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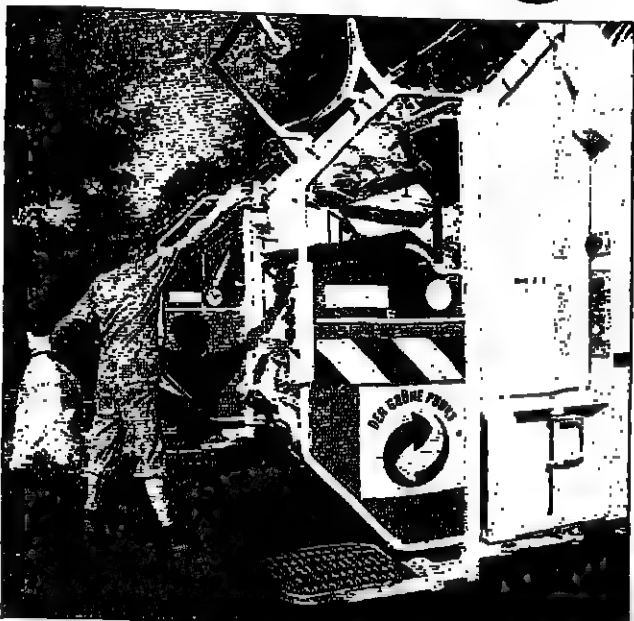
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OUTDOORS

15

Only one in three of us recycles our rubbish. What a waste, says Tony Kelly

Why are Britons so bad at recycling?



Waste collection in Germany: the laws on recycling are tough

Be honest. What will you do with this newspaper when you have finished reading it? Show it in the dustbin or put it to one side in a special newspaper box? And what will happen to that empty bottle of cabernet after your Sunday lunch?

If you're planning to visit a paper or a bottle bank, you are in a minority. Only about one in three people regularly recycles rubbish and overall the recycling of domestic waste in Britain hovers miserably around the 5 per cent mark, against a government target of 25 per cent (and a figure of 30 per cent in Germany).

It's not, as if it's difficult: many supermarkets provide facilities. So why are we so bad at recycling?

Perhaps it is the suspicion that we will be wasting our time. Even those who sort paper from plastic, Coke cans from champagne corks (yes, even these can be recycled) must sometimes wonder whether it is worthwhile. Stories of paper mountains dumped into landfills, even during a crisis in the world paper market, only feed suspicions.

Recycling makes us feel good, but does it do any good? What happens to our rubbish after we have lugged it to the bank?

A £6 million, solar-powered, state-of-the-art recycling centre at Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, provides some answers. Huge mounds of paper and cardboard are sorted and crushed before being packed into bales and taken off to paper mills. Steel and aluminium cans are sorted mechanically and by hand, crushed

"This isn't Germany or Japan, where people are ostracised for creating waste"

and sent to the mills for reuse. Plastic bottles are granulated or turned into flakes, washed and sent off for remoulding.

"We don't take anything we haven't got a market for," says Jill King, the recycling officer for Milton Keynes council.

"That's the first principle of recycling: you can't just collect stuff and then think afterwards about what to do with it." This is what happened in Germany in the early 1990s, when recycling rose faster than demand and foreign markets were flooded with cheap recycled material.

"We are in the business of providing quality raw materials for industry," Mrs King says. It just happens to be environmentally friendly as well.

Milton Keynes was the first local authority to introduce a door-to-door recycling collection scheme. In 1992, each household is offered two boxes — a red one for paper, textiles and cardboard, and a blue one for plastic, glass, foil and tins. Both boxes are collected weekly. Two-thirds of the city's households take part and the proportion of waste recycled has risen to 25 per cent.

But don't some people make



Martin Heaton, operations manager at the Milton Keynes recycling centre, amid tonnes of baled cans

mistakes and put things in the wrong box? About 2½ per cent of what comes in is rejected, mostly labels and bottle tops," Mrs King says. "That's much lower than the rate for paper and bottle banks, where people dump anything from dead birds to dirty needles."

Yet such a scheme as this must have limits. "I think we've almost reached saturation point," says Mrs King. "Sixty per cent of the paper going into houses in Milton Keynes is coming back. There will always be a minority who are reluctant to recycle, and if you try to force them it won't work. This isn't Germany or Japan, where people are ostracised for creating waste."

Japan, however, is looking for new ideas on recycling and sent two planners to meet Mrs King, who showed me a pile of presents they left — wrapped in layers of environmentally friendly packaging.

It's not only foreigners who come to learn at Milton Keynes: there are tours for the public and a school visit each day. Children look at products created from local waste — cat litter from newspapers, fleece lining out of drinks

bottles — and return home to educate their parents.

The city's scheme is starting to be copied elsewhere in Britain. In Bath it is run as a partnership between the city council and Avon Friends of the Earth. An FoE survey in 1992 found that most people approve of recycling household waste and are willing to do it, but don't. The evidence from Bath and Milton Keynes suggests that if you make it user-friendly enough, they do.

So what else can be done to encourage recycling? The Chancellor has announced a landfill tax, to be introduced in October, which should provide an incentive for local authorities to increase their recycling rates. Then there is pressure on industry not to produce the waste in the first place — as in Germany and Denmark, where businesses must pay for the disposal or recycling of all packaging.

One controversial suggestion is that consumers should be hit where it hurts — in the pocket. In Germany and some states of America, rubbish is sorted into different coloured boxes, with a black box for non-recyclables which attracts a collection charge. This would be illegal in Britain, where councils are required to

provide a free refuse collection service. "It wouldn't work anyway," Mrs King says. "People would dump rubbish on their neighbours, throw it into hedges or just cheat by putting rubbish in their recycling box."

Perhaps. But when each household contributes a tonne of rubbish to landfill sites every year it is clear that something has to be done.

Sweden recycles 86 per cent of its aluminium cans; in Britain it is barely 20 per cent. With glass, Britain (30 per cent) comes bottom in Europe, behind Greece and Turkey — though this ignores the benefits of the doorstep milk service, now in decline.

Perhaps the model to follow is that of the Third World, where recycling is an economic fact of life. At Milton Keynes there is a display of the typical contents of a British dustbin, with a much smaller one from Ghana. There is also a collection of everyday Ghanaian goods: nutmeg graters bashed out of old milk cans, sandals made from tyres, drinking bowls fashioned from gourds. Recycling at its most basic.

This sort of approach has been adopted by Wye Cycle, a waste-reduction scheme organised by the village of

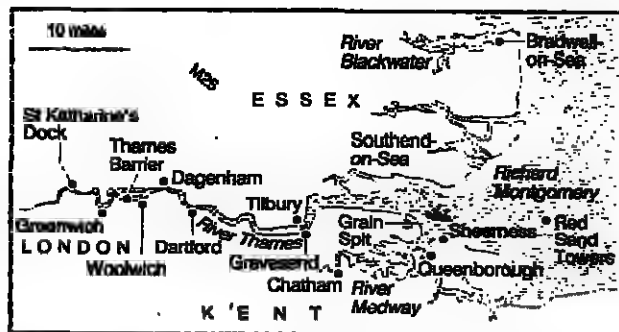
Wye, near Ashford, Kent. "We try to prevent waste being produced in the first place, rather than running round collecting it," says Richard Boden, the co-ordinator. "We think it is better to refill plastic bottles than to send them to Cheshire to be turned into garden furniture."

Vegetables are delivered, unpackaged, from local farms; retailers buy detergent in bulk and swap empty bottles for full ones. Compost is created from local waste and returned to people in the village. Some households have cut their waste by as much as 90 per cent, many by about half.

Perhaps this is the way forward. "Reduce, re-use, recycle," goes the green slogan, with recycling the option of last resort. Sometimes it is the only option. But as you hear your bottles being smashed at the bottom of the bottle bank, don't you ever wonder why they can't simply be washed up and used again?

● The Milton Keynes Recycling Facility has public tours every Wednesday at 2.30pm; £2, children £1. There is an Open Day on Saturday, March 23 at 3pm (details: 01908 225000). Information on local recycling and waste reduction schemes, from Wasteline, 0171-248 0242.

Battered on a windswept Thames



The 5.55am shipping forecast spoke of "gales in all areas", with a possible Force 9 in Thames. But after a wild night on a mooring at Queenborough, Kent, all we aimed to do was sail up the Thames into the heart of London, berthing in St Katharine's Dock by Tower Bridge.

Although we would be sailing the 35 or so miles into the teeth of the southwesterly gale, most of it would be under engine and we would have the tide to propel us along the ever-narrowing twists and turns of the lower reaches of the river.

We had set off the day before in *Nutcracker*, my 35ft Dutch-built cutter, from Bradwell-on-Sea in Essex. Twenty-four hours later, as the wind rocked us backwards and forwards, my crew, Mike McCarthy, and I

slipped the mooring, unfurled the jib and sailed off on a reach out of Queenborough into the mouth of the Medway, passing the docks at Sheerness and the giant Grain power station to our left.

To start with, we headed east to avoid the Grain Spit. The seaward end is marked by the wreck of the *Richard Montgomery*, an ammunition ship which ran aground with 7,000 tons of explosive on board in 1944. The ship still has at least half its cargo inside it and is marked by a series of yellow buoys. Parts of the superstructure are visible above the water. The most impressive are the offshore gun platforms built to hit German bombers using the river to navigate to London's East End.

Queenborough to Tower Bridge should take between five and six hours with the tide under you. We sailed for the first few hours, punching the tide as far as Gravesend Reach. Here we gave up short-tacking in between large ships making their way to and from Tilbury and started the engine. Even on that relatively wide part of the river sailing was frustrating, with much going about and *Nutcracker* falling away badly on one side with the adverse current.

There was also the difficulty of judging passing ships going at speed, which sometimes forced us to lurk in the shallows to avoid any possibility of getting in their way in mid-channel. High up on the bridge, several skippers waved in an appreciative thanks as they rumbled by. Gravesend, like other riverside towns, looked grey and uninviting in the squally win-

ter weather. Here the hail that blew into our faces was so sharp that we had to shield our eyes to see over the bow. After the cranes and derricks of Tilbury, the river takes you under the Queen Elizabeth II road bridge, which carries the M25 over the Thames, 80 metres above the water. Under us the traffic of the Dartford Tunnel passed unheard as we bounced along with the increasing current.

Then came a memorable approach to the Thames Barrier, whose pillars look like a medieval battlement besiding the river, with the towers of the City of London silhouetted behind them. Large notices instruct you to notify Woolwich Radio on VHF Ch 14 of your approach and you are then told which span of the structure to sail through. Once we reached the fashionable Docklands developments it was not only tugs pulling barge-loads of rubbish downstream that we had to avoid but pleasure craft and sight-seeing boats.

Happily, however, we had picked up so much speed with the tide that we ended up outside St Katharine's yacht basin an hour early, and the storms of the previous night seemed long ago.

"It was eventful," reflected a weary, cold Mike. "But next time we go in the summer."

EDWARD GORMAN

Travel, page 20



Nutcracker preparing to dock at St Katharine's

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Hawk loses a thorny battle

Feather report

I WAS wandering through some fields the other day when I suddenly heard a loud, shrilling cry of fear coming from a distant thicket of hawthorn bushes. I swept the field-glasses round and found a struggle going on in one of them. A dark brown, female sparrowhawk was spreadeagled, half upside-down, deep in the bush, and suspended below her was a redwing, completely upside down, one wing dangling. I could see the broad blaze of crimson across the redwing's armpit, and its gleaming white underbelly.

The birds were completely entangled in the thorns. The hawk evidently had a light hold on the redwing with one of its talons, and the victim could not break free. At the same time, the hawk could not right itself and move without letting go.

There were a few convulsive movements in the bush, and some white feathers drifted out. Then there was stillness and silence. It was a complete deadlock.

The situation was resolved a moment later by a man approaching with a dog. The hawk abandoned its prey, twisted round and flew off rapidly.

I went closer, wondering what state the redwing would be in, and was astonished to see it fly out of the bush apparently



Marauding sparrowhawk

unharmful. It must have dived into the bush when the hawk flew at it — and its stratagem had succeeded.

I would have felt sorry for the redwing if it had lost the battle but now I felt sorry for the hawk that had lost its meal. Small birds have techniques for protecting

themselves. Generally, birds of one species do not react to the calls of another. But this is not the case with alarm calls. A blackbird sees a sparrowhawk circling overhead and, as it sweeps into cover, gives a loud, clattering cry. A wren hears it and starts "tick-ticking", and a robin does the same. Then some long-tailed tits start chattering, and they all move to a less exposed place.

WHAT was particularly surprising during the battle I saw in the bush is that all the while a blue tit was hopping about feeding, only a foot or two from the sparrowhawk. I think that it simply did not recognise the hawk. It had the built-in ability to recognise the form of a hawk overhead or approaching, but nothing in its genes helped it with an upside-down sparrowhawk. So it just went calmly and happily on its way.

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The gift that grows

ITALY: Walter Ellis wanders the old churches of Tuscany, Charles FitzRoy explores Bologna, and...

A pride of pulpits

TUSCANY is one of those places everyone assumes you have been to. Since the first British colonists arrived in the 1500s, with their do-it-yourself guides to Italian land purchase, the region has become in our imagination not a lush and storied corner of Europe's most favoured nation, but Chianti, a kind of southern annex of the Cotswolds, with cheap wine and excellent home help.

My first trip to Tuscany, last autumn, was an attempt to bridge a cultural gap. The idea was that my partner and I would fly to Pisa, meet up with a group of fellow seekers after truth and spend up to six hours a day exploring a range of art and architectural treasures. Our guide was Dr. Edward Chaney, of Oxford Brookes University. Dr Chaney, after the death of his patron, Harold Acton, is the greatest living authority on the "grand tour", and I had somehow expected an elderly, stooped martinet, tut-tutting over our amateur confusions. He turned out to be a dapper figure, in his early forties, who wished everyone to have a good time and was ready to bend all sorts of rules to accommodate our wishes.

"Home" each night was a hillside villa belonging to an affable Hampstead couple, Berenice and John Bonallick. Our bedroom overlooked the patio, and the view extended into the hills for miles in all directions. Even in October there were crickets chirruping and an abundance of flowers. The air was clear and cool, so that at night the stars burst through with a most un-English radiance and, occasionally, wood smoke, perfumed with resin, drifted up from the valley.

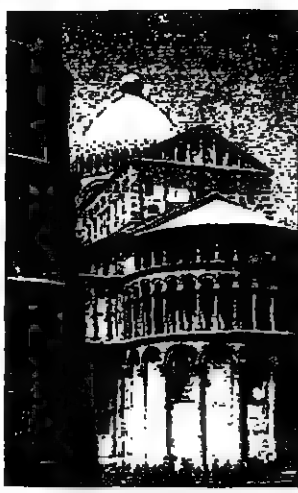
First, though, straight from the airport, we had learnt to suffer for our art. It was in Pisa, in the airy immensity of the Baptistery, at the opposite end of the Piazza dei Miracoli to the leaning tower, that we encountered our first pulpit. Dr Chaney, it emerged, was not just a voluble Eurosceptic but a bit of a pulpit fetishist, believing that the glories of Cimabue, Caravaggio and Raphael had to be measured against the complexities of a decent 12th or 13th-century preaching platform, particularly if made by Nicola or Giovanni Pisano. Clearly we were going to have to keep our wits about us.

Relief came when a church employee, who seemed to combine the offices of vergier, cantor and curator, treated us to a spontaneous demonstration of the Baptistery's acoustics. The harmonics he released via a pure tenor voice resonated round the walls and proved an eerie experience, albeit one of which Pope Gregory I would have approved. That night, as every night, we dined

superbly, fed by Lucinda, a graduate of the Prue Leith school of cookery. As the courses kept coming and the wine flowed, presided over by the beneficent Bonallicks, our little group of disparate souls began to coalesce around inevitable stories of marital disharmony, career crises and financial frustrations: the middle classes at supper.

What time would we set off in the morning, our leader inquired as midnight came and went. Nine o'clock? "Ten, ten," came the bibulous reply. And so to bed.

Our tour took us, twice, to Lucca, an almost perfect medieval town, its ramparts as formidable as during the centuries when it resisted Tuscan expansion and the power of the Medici. The churches and galleries of



Pisa cathedral and tower

Lucca are remarkable and contain many treasures, including a splendid late 15th-century pulpit in the duomo by Civitali. Even so, my partner and I begged time off to negotiate, by means of sign language, the purchase of hunkies of Panna ham, parmesan cheese, a horse-shoe of salami and a bottle of Lucchese olive oil. This was culture of another kind. Midweek found us lined up outside the Villa Medici in Fiesole. The villa is amazing. It was the first "modern" mansion, commissioned by Cosimo de' Medici in the early 1450s for his son, Giovanni, but was so successful in execution that it could easily be taken for the Long Island retreat of the Great Gatsby. Our problem was that it was closed, yet such was Dr Chaney's indignation, combining academic hauteur with fluent stupefaction, that we were hurriedly admitted to the grounds.

Prato, on the way to Florence, has a museum housing one of Italy's most important collections of contemporary art. It also boasts a series of splendid frescoes by Fra Filippo Lippi. But the highlight for our party was the Pulpit of the Sacred Girdle, by Donatello and Michelozzo, in the duomo. Next stop, Pistoia. The Pistoiesi have a violent history and gave their name to an early firearm, but the town's outstanding work of art is — yes — the pulpit in the church of Sant'Andrea by Giovanni Pisano, the serenity of which is thought by some to rival that of Michelangelo. By now, we scarcely needed to be told.

● The author was a guest of Simply Tuscany & Umbria, 598-608 Chiswick High Road, London W4 3RT (0181-995 8277). Tuscany Art & Architecture tours cost £595 per person for a seven-night stay, including flights, which can be arranged from £180. The price includes guided excursions, tuition, transfers, entrance fees and half-board accommodation with dinner. Tours depart on April 13 and October 5.

Fat City plump in neglected treasures

It is a well-kept secret that Bologna is the most civilised and underrated city in Italy, neglected by the hordes who descend on Florence and Venice. This is a city to wander through, enjoying the wealth of medieval and Renaissance palazzi from under the cover of endless picturesque arcades, and stopping whenever you feel like enjoying the marvellous food. I have selected two from my number of leading restaurants which have earned the city the title *la Grassa*, the Fat. (See Getting there, below right)

The blame for the demise in Bologna's popularity can be laid at the door of Ruskin, whose scathing condemnation of the Bolognese school brought a volte-face in Victorian public opinion, one that has lasted until the present day. Although the names of the leading Bolognese painters — Annibale Carracci, Guido Reni and Domenichino — once ranked alongside those of Raphael and Michelangelo, and far above Giotto and Masaccio, and their works embellished the walls of all the greatest English country houses, you can spend a pleasant hour in the Pinacoteca in Bologna admiring their Baroque masterpieces without encountering another tourist.

If your love of painting is restricted to the Renaissance, the church of San Giacomo Maggiore, the parish church of the all-powerful Bentivoglio family, contains some wonderful frescoes by the little-known Lorenzo Costa and Francesco Francia in the apse of the Bentivoglio Chapel. There are more delightful frescoes by Costa, Francia and Aspertini

A CONNOISSEUR'S GUIDE TO BOLOGNA



in the Oratory of St Cecilia behind the church: they rank with anything being painted by their contemporaries in Florence at the beginning of the 16th century.

The most splendid architectural ensemble in the city is the central Piazza Maggiore. The struggle for power between the church, the *comune* (civic council) and the guilds — represented in Bologna by the lawyers and the bankers, a struggle which afflicted every medieval town — is vividly illustrated in the competing magnificence of the palaces facing the square.

The vast unfinished facade of San Petronio, one of the most gigantic Gothic buildings ever erected in Italy, testifies to the enormous wealth of the city during the Middle Ages. This was the church chosen for the coronation of the Habsburg Emperor Charles V in 1530.

The Piazza Nettuno, leading off the north side of the square, is centred on the commanding bronze statue of Neptune by Giambologna. All but the most curious Bolognese maidens pretended to avert their gaze when passing beneath the trident of the unashamedly naked figure of the god of the sea.

A number of museums are clustered around the Piazza Maggiore. The Archaeological Museum has an important collection of Egyptian and Etruscan objects, and the Morandi Museum, in the Palazzo Comunale, features the charming and peaceful works of the 20th-century painter Giorgio Morandi.

The most remarkable building is the extraordinary Anatomical Theatre, known as the Archiginnasio, which stands at the heart of the former site of the university, the oldest in Europe. Inside the building, which has been superbly restored after a bomb landed on it during the Second World War, the statues of famous professors of medicine, and dissected corpses supporting the professor of anatomy's chair, gaze down impressively on to an operating table.

Bologna is full of wonderful Renaissance sculpture. Pride of place goes to Jacopo della



The magnificent bronze statue of Neptune by Giambologna dominates the Piazza Nettuno

Getting there

□ The author is chairman of Fine Art Travel (0171-437 8553, fax 437 1739), which organises specialist tours. Italy Sky Shuttle (0181-749 1333) offers return flights to Bologna from £15.

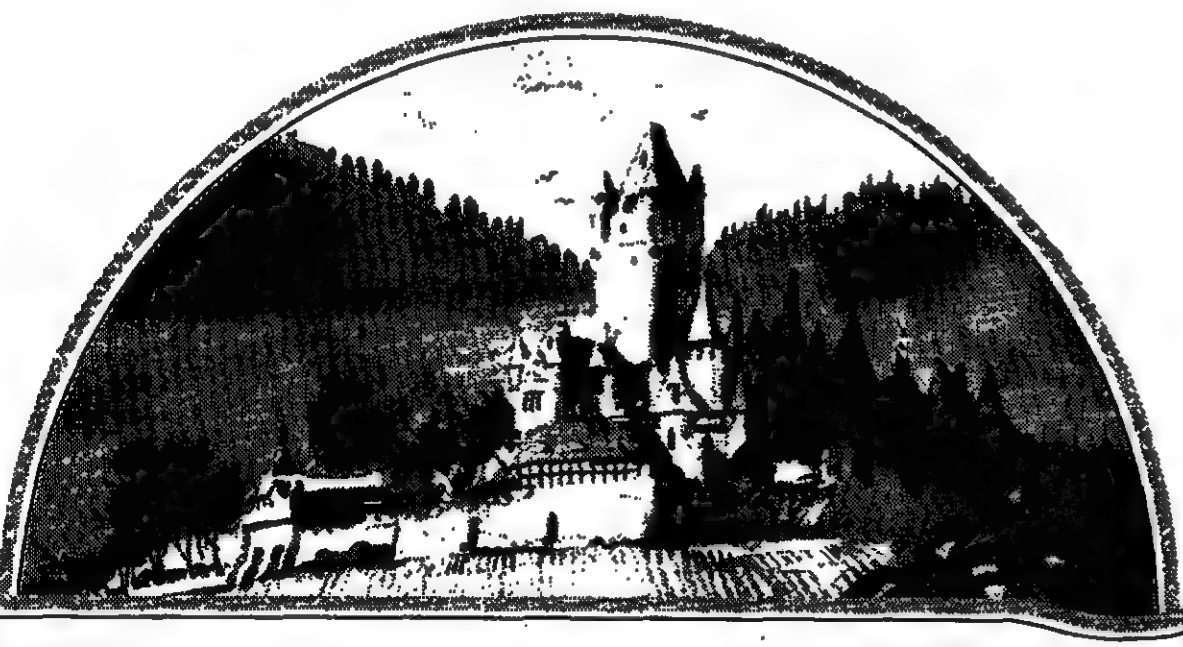
□ Hotels (prices are for a double room per night and vary according to season): Grand Hotel Baglioni, Via Indipendenza 3 (00 39 51 225 445), £133. Hotel Orologio, Via IV Novembre 10 (050 552) £95. Hotel Cavour, Via Goleto 4 (228 111) £75.

□ Restaurants: Grassilli, Via del Luzzo 3, the best place to eat the *corteina bolognese* (veal). Anna Maria, Via dell'Art, for those who love Bolognese pasta. Da Nello, Via Montegrappa 2, specialises in deep-fried vegetables.



not miss the complex of churches clustered around Santo Stefano, dating back to the 5th century. An ancient pilgrimage centre, built in imitation of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, this is one of the most atmospheric places in all Italy.

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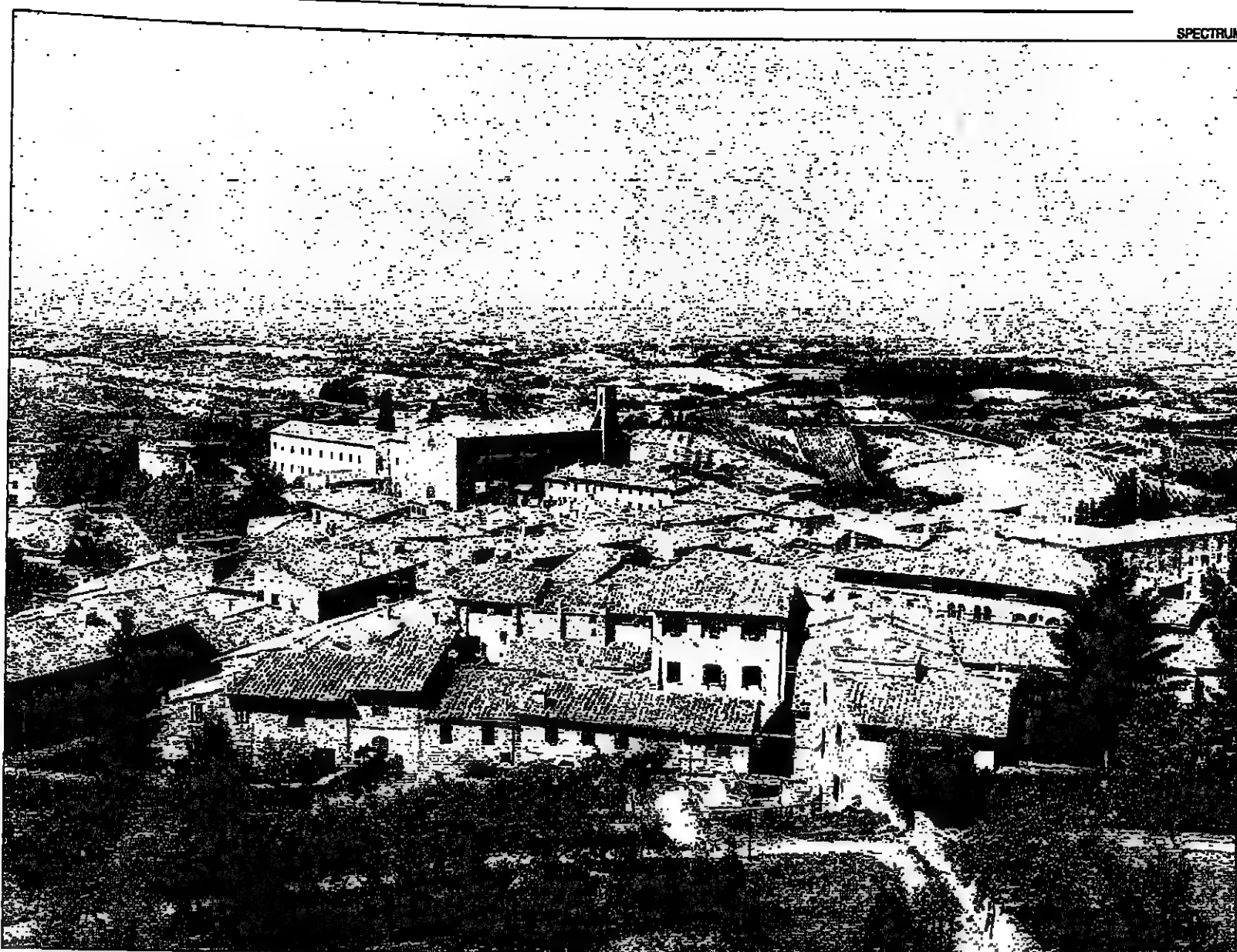
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TRAVEL

17

... Jeremy Paxman takes a stroll in the hills around Sienna



The picturesque town of San Gimignano, perched on hilltops overlooking vineyards and fields, is a welcome sight after a long, hot walk

Walking for wimps

Face the church and, before the cypress trees, take a little path down to the left. At bamboo tractor shed continue along path past goat enclosure. Turn left in village by shrine inscribed 'Ave Maria'. This is emphatically not the Tuscany of the obnoxious coachloads of obese tourists sandwiching medieval churches between pasta and ice-cream.

The fortified towns of Tuscany, perched on hilltops overlooking vineyards and fields, were designed to resist attack. But the invasion of Nikkon-toting hordes has achieved the one central square.

The air was sweet with the scent of broom and dog rose.

ers we had met that day were a couple of lost German archaeologists searching for an Etruscan necropolis. It came as a shock to walk through the gates of the town and discover that we weren't the only visitors. We felt we deserved the ringing lemon ice-creams the others took for granted.

The Tuscans are not entirely at fault with the idea of walking for pleasure. The farmer tending his vines looked up with an expression of indulgent bafflement. The occasional tractor and vans passing along the strada bianca connecting distant fortified farms would offer a lift on the assumption that no one walks unless their car has broken down or the sun has added their brain.

When we declined, they smilingly indulged us.

It was worth it. Most of the walk was along farm tracks

speed at which it is best appreciated. This, you feel, is how you ought to come to town, with a small sack on your back, a ripe peach in hand and ever so slightly footsore.

When you approach a town such as Monteriggioni, its medieval walls and 14 towers perched high on a hilltop, you see it first through heat haze and perspiration. It is precisely the view Dante had, which he recalled in the *Inferno*.

Of the towns on this short walk, Monteriggioni is the most charming, with its a hundred inhabitants, single food store, excellent restaurant and charming hotel, all set on the one central square.

Colle Val d'Elsa, another fort perched on a hilltop, with a bustling town below, was almost as quiet. And even San Gimignano, one of the compulsory stops on every charabanc tour, seems charmed after a day's walk. The only other foreign-

ers we had met that day were a couple of lost German archaeologists searching for an Etruscan necropolis. It came as a shock to walk through the gates of the town and discover that we weren't the only visitors. We felt we deserved the ringing lemon ice-creams the others took for granted.

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It was worth it. Most of the walk was along farm tracks



and scarcely used paths where the flowers and bushes formed an arch over our heads and the air was sweet with the scent of broom and dog rose. Some times we passed through vineyards, where the vines were still grown in the Etruscan style on pollarded sycamores. Other times we walked beside burns whose stink proclaimed a hundred pigs on their way to

becoming parma hams. Once, as we dropped down a dell, three young roe deer continued gazing just yards in front of us until, with a start, they scampered off through the trees.

The illusions during this sort of holiday are multiple: that you are not part of the tourist crowd (you are, of course, but luckily you don't see the rest of them); that you are pathfinding (you're actually following a well-researched trail); that you're discovering the delightful hotels or B&Bs for yourselves (in fact, they've all been booked in advance).

The walking itself would be laughed at by any serious hiker. It is extremely unchallenging, not a patch on, say, the Scottish Highlands. But the Highlands have miserable wine and you couldn't find a village grocer to knock you up a parma ham and parmesan sandwich for love or money.

We never covered more than nine or so miles a day, which in the June sun was enough. The route instructions were

accompanied — for the benefit of the neurotic or easily confused — by precise measures of the number of metres between directions. They have been refined over the years and we got lost only once.

Our bags, which had been left in the lobby of the last hotel that morning, would reappear in the hotel room of our destination that night. It was walking for sofas, certainly, but it's a nice way to see Tuscany.

Fact file

The author travelled to Tuscany as a guest of Alternative Travel, 69-71 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 6PE (01865 310244), which offers a seven-night holiday from £695, including scheduled return flights from Gatwick by Alitalia, dinner, bed and breakfast, picnic lunches and transfer of luggage between stops.

TRAVEL TIPS

□ Solo's (0181-951 2811) has a week-long painting course in Provence which tours the landscapes that Cézanne made famous. The course is for singles and costs £685 per person, including three days' tuition from a local artist, seven nights B&B in a family-run hotel in St Rémy-de-Provence, three dinners and coach transfers.

□ VFB Holidays (01242 240310) offers self-catering cottages in Cézanne country for up to five people from £150 per week in early July. The cottages, in Trets, are close to the hills of Mont Ste. Victoire and the vineyards of the Var. Self-drive prices include accommodation and ferry crossings.

□ P&O (0990 980 980) has new day-trips to Le Havre or Cherbourg from Portsmouth for £29 per person. Passengers must take a car and at least one other person. The price includes an on-board three-course meal and ten hours in France. The offer runs until June 30.

□ Headwater Holidays (01606 48699) has a cross-country skiing beginners' week in central France for £297 per person, starting on March 23. The skiing area is at Les Estables, near Ste. Etienne, and is ideal for those new to the sport. The price includes seven nights' full board in the three-star Hotel Decouverte, self-drive with a Hover-

speed Channel crossing from Dover to Calais, and five days' Nordic skiing tuition. The package also includes ski pass and hire of boots, poles and skis.

□ Admirers of the Impressionists have until June 30 to enjoy two-night weekend breaks by Citalia (0181-686 5533) for £339 in Milan, where Russia's Pushkin Museum is showing 85 masterpieces at the Palazzo Reale. The price includes flights, transfers and B&B at the three-star City Hotel on the main shopping street, Corso Buenos Aires. Entrance to the exhibition is £6.50.

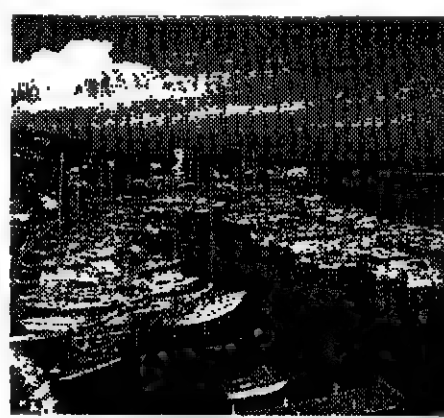
□ A two-night B&B weekend break in the five-star Hotel Roma in Rome is £288 with Cresta Holidays (0990 561814). The price is based on two people sharing. Half-day "artistic Rome" tours, which visit the Vatican Museums and the Sistine Chapel, can be pre-booked with Cresta for £22.50. Flights from Gatwick.

□ Walk gently along Italy's beautiful Ligurian coast for a week from May 18 for £510 with Waymark Holidays (01753 516477). Each day includes a guided walk from the Hotel Noris in the village of Alassio. Return flights are from Stansted to Nice and luggage transfers are included.

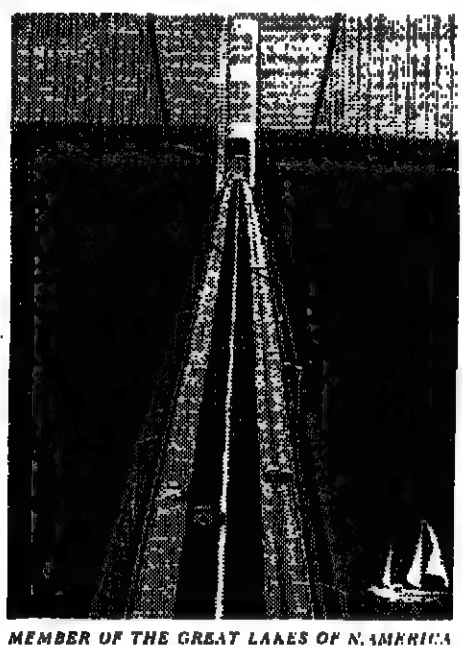
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From Itea we shall visit the Temple of Apollo, site of the famous Delphic Oracle and then continue to the island of Corfu, one of the most beautiful and varied of all Greek islands. Crossing the Adriatic we shall moor in a rarely visited area of South Eastern Italy at the port of Monopoli. Here the unique trulli architecture (archaic cone-roofed stone house) and the medieval villages make for a fascinating morning of exploration. Our penultimate call will be Ravenna, the western capital of Byzantium and the east of Venice's suzerain lord, the Exarch. Finally, in the early hours of the morning we shall approach Venice. Be on deck before breakfast to witness our arrival at this most splendid of all Italian cities.

*This date operates in reverse order from Venice to Athens.

THE ITINERARY

DAY 1 London-Athens
DAY 2 Athens
DAY 3 Athens
DAY 4 Kusaei
DAY 5 Bodrum
DAY 6 Itrikion
DAY 7 Santorini
DAY 8 Corinth Canal-Itea
DAY 9 Corfu
DAY 10 Monopoli
DAY 11 Ravenna
DAY 12 Venice
DAY 13 Venice-London

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Inclusive prices range from £2695 for a Standard suite to £3995 for a Premium suite. Single Standard suites are £3795.

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Sailing out of Venice in the early evening is a wondrous sight. This will be followed by a day cruising the Adriatic en-route to Corfu, when we shall make the most of the vessel's excellent facilities. Our itinerary will take us from the lovely island of Corfu to Sicily, an island where the whole history of the Mediterranean is mirrored, and on to the Amalfi Coast. Here, amongst some of the most enchanting coastal scenery imaginable, we will visit the remarkable Roman city of Pompeii and the lovely Isle of Capri.

Before continuing our Italian journey we will make a deviation to the beautiful southern coast of Corsica and from there return to the Italian resort of Portofino. This is surely one of the most picturesque and romantic coastal towns anywhere along the shores of the Mediterranean.

Following the Tuscan coast we will reach Livorno, our port for Florence. The Renaissance, one of the great epochs of European civilisation, originated here in the great city of Florence and our full day excursion will include some of its treasures.

Our final port will be Monaco where we will have a full day to explore the principality and the Riviera beyond as well as an overnight mooring allowing us to enjoy Monte Carlo by night.

*This date operates in reverse order from Monte Carlo to Venice.

THE ITINERARY

DAY 1 London-Venice
DAY 2 Venice
DAY 3 At sea
DAY 4 Corfu
DAY 5 Taormina
DAY 6 Sorrento, Amalfi Coast
DAY 7 Bonifacio
DAY 8 Portofino
DAY 9 Livorno for Florence
DAY 10 Monte Carlo
DAY 11 Monte Carlo-London

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18

TRAVEL

INDIA: Stephen McClarence in Dharamsala joins the horde ...

Levis and lamas on the road to Shangri-La

They sit in the Rising Horizon café nibbling their banana cake and sipping their cinnamon tea. Crows caw outside the window. "I had to enter an empty space," says a man with a greasy ponytail and John Lennon specs to a woman with a stubbly, shaved head. "You know — a real recess in my mind."

At the next table, an ample American nun is sharing wisdom with a maroon-robed Buddhist monk. "The bottom line of consciousness," she draws, "is that we are whole. And how many parts are there in a whole?" The monk stares deep into his dinner. How many steamed dumplings are



there in a bowl of soup? We are talking ego-tourism up here in Dharamsala, in what the road signs call The Valley of Peace and Love. Perched on a ridge high in the clouds, it is one of the last outposts of bell-bottoms and tie-dye T-shirts, droopy moustaches and floppy velvet hats. It's Dreadlocksville, man, and, hey, it really grooves.

People who look as though they've been tied up in a sack since Woodstock come here, up hairpin-bends, to crash out, to space out, to get high in the Himalayas. They come for the karma, for the dharma, for the Dalai Lama.

His Holiness, as all call him, has been based here with his Tibetan Government-in-exile and 5,000 of his followers since 1960. His presence has helped turn McLeodganj, at the upper end of Dharamsala, from a scruffy Indian hill station into a state of mind, a Nirvana-Nirvana land, a cool Kathmandu-substitute for Crosby, Stills, Nash and the not-so-Young. It's a whiff of New Age for 1960s freaks approaching old age and it vibrates with Grateful Dead polsutes with Pink Floyd.

People come here, 300 miles north of Delhi, expecting Shangri-La. What they find is, at heart, a shanty town. McLeodganj — McLeod Nine, some call it — has open sewers and rubbish-strewn hillsides. The Zen Video Theatre screens the World Wrestling Federation. The bazaars are stacked with cassettes of Prayer Music for World Peace, Lhasa Karaoke and trinkets for the Westerners who dress like Tibetans. A fair few Tibetans



Monks tread the hard mountain road to Dharamsala, but for many truth lies at the end

prefer Levis and trainers. The Dalai Lama goes for stout walking shoes and a yellow umbrella. Since boyhood he has been campaigning against the Chinese persecution of Tibetans. His directness throws into relief the woolly romanticism of many of his Western followers, with their sentimental vision of the Lost Horizon. His press releases carry an e-mail code.

In his private audience room, he offers a crisp critique of materialism and says he doesn't expect the West's interest in Buddhism to end with him, despite the personality cult others have created. His every word is treasured. A glimpse of him in a passing car lights up Tibetan faces. Hands press involuntarily together in prayer. His subjects spend weeks trudging over

mountains to catch sight of him as Tibetan new year rituals that seem to echo down from a distant age.

Crowds pack the temple courtyard, twirling their creaking prayer wheels. Old women, with faces like creased leather and bright silk threads braided into their hair, squat. Bells chime. Monks chant in low growls. Multicoloured prayer flags flutter like pennants at a regatta. The scent of burning juniper wafts over prostrating pilgrims.

Suddenly priests in plumed yellow hats stream from the temple and conch-shell fanfares sound over the mountains. It is as mystically "other" as you could hope for. The Dalai Lama can bring it all instantly down to earth. He

Continued on next page

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For many the visit to Kizhi Island in Lake Onega will be the highlight of the waterway journey. Here the magnificent Church of the Transfiguration with its 22 shimmering grey domes in three tiers are more than a match for the fairytale splendour of Moscow's St Basil's. From here we cruise through the fascinating waterway system through Gorky to the cities of the Golden Ring, stopping at Yaroslavl and Uglich on the mighty Volga. These magical cities of Holy Russia still preserve their medieval fortresses, fortified monasteries and churches, in surroundings remote from the modern world.

For this journey we have selected the MS Karamzin which, although not as high a standard as our other vessel the MV Kurov, offers very good facilities considering the competitive tariff. This is especially relevant in view of the high hotel prices now applied in Russia due to the westernisation of the hotels. This tour will therefore appeal to those wishing to see unspoilt parts of Russia from an economical and comfortable base.

The MS Karamzin

This comfortable, well-maintained ship was built in Germany and partially renovated this year. All cabins are outside with large picture windows (except those on the Lower Deck that have two portholes), private shower, toilet and individual temperature control; the ship is fully air-conditioned. The bright, pleasant restaurant has windows on three sides offering views as you dine. Cuisine (Russian and Continental) is adjusted to western taste. There is a main lounge/bar with live music, several more lounges, a sunbather's deck, beauty shop and ample deck space. Laundry service is available and a medical doctor is on board. As the ship is now under Western management, you can



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expect many upgraded amenities (including quality towels, soap, toilet paper, coffee) and better food, service, cruise director and staff.

Itinerary

Day 1 Depart from London by air to St Petersburg. Drive to the MS Karamzin which will moor in St Petersburg for two nights.

Day 2 In the morning a sightseeing tour of the city will include the Fortress of St Peter and St Paul.

Day 3 Visit the Hermitage Museum in the morning. Afternoon visit to Pushkin, the blue and gold rococo palace designed for the Empress Elizabeth by

Rastrelli. In the afternoon explore St Petersburg. Sail in the evening.

Day 4 Svir River - the day is spent leisurely cruising Lake Ladoga and the Svir River stopping at the village of Svir, a quaint riverside village.

Day 5 Kizhi Island - sail across Lake Onega to Kizhi Island. A tour will encompass some splendid examples of 18th-century Russian architecture including typical wooden churches, houses with early baroque and a windmill.

Day 6 Goritsy - sail along the Baltic Canal and across White Lake to the town of Goritsy to visit the well-preserved Kirill-Belosselsk Monastery.

Day 7 Yaroslavl - a city sightseeing tour will include the churches of the Kremlin overlooking the Volga and fine examples of the town's 19th-century architecture.

Day 8 Cruise along the Volga to Uglich. Founded in the 12th century, it was here that Ivan the Terrible's youngest son, Dmitry, was murdered. We visit the Church of St Demetrius, built on the spot where his body was found. On our walking tour we will also see the medieval Kremlin. Sail in the evening towards Moscow.

Day 9 Sail along the River Moskva reaching Moscow itself in the late morning. A city tour is arranged for the afternoon.

Day 10 Morning city tour of Moscow to include the sights such as Red Square, St Basil's Cathedral and the Kremlin.

Day 11 Transfer to the airport for the flight to Gatwick.

Departures & Prices

1996 - per person on the Lower Deck
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August 31* £695.00
September 11, 21* £695.00
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* these departure dates are for the evening direction (Moscow to St Petersburg) and include one extra night visiting Karamzin. All prices are per person.

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A 14-night itinerary is also available at a supplement of £240 per person on the following dates: May 25 (ex. Moscow), June 8 (ex. St Petersburg), August 3 (ex. Moscow) and August 17 (ex. St Petersburg). Please contact us for further details.

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Itinerary at a Glance

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Ouro Preto (Pousada Mondego) 2 nights
Manaus (Hotel Tropical) 1 night

Amazon (Amazon Village) 2 nights
Salvador (Hotel Bahia Othon) 1 night

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TRAVEL

19

... of truth-seekers at the court of the Dalai Lama; and haunting palace hideaways in Rajasthan's hills



Listened to in awe by priests and Western backpackers, the Dalai Lama gives teachings at the Namgyal Monastery in the McLeodganj shanty town area of Dharamsala

Continued from page 18

rebirthing, magnetology and inner-body cleansing ("with water techniques"). He has cures for "confusion, inferiority complex, misery due to doubts, cold, catarrh, obesity, paralysis, pessimistic attitude and pain in the knees".

Down the road, Dr Yeshi Dhonden, the Dalai Lama's physician, holds surgeries for visitors. A young French woman brings a urine sample in a jam jar. Dr Dhonden pours it into a mixing jug and whisks it as though preparing an omelette. He feels her pulse, forbids ice-cream and prescribes pills that include elephants' gallstones.

It wasn't always like this, a

Little Tibet in India. In the half-light of his 136-year-old general store, Mr N.N. Nowrojee is nostalgic for "the good old days" when Dharamsala was a fashionable British hill resort, a place for colonialists to escape the heat of the plains. His father imported whisky and uncut cheese for the soldiers and administrators.

The 1940s advertisements for Peak Freans' Glaxo biscuits and the Valet Auto-Stop Safety Razor still hang over the counters. Look at this album, he says — page after sepia page of plus-fours and pith helmets and people certain they were doing the right thing by India. Most of them are now in the St John-in-the-

Wilderness churchyard. It's a poignant, forlorn place, full of inspectors of telegraphs and surgeon-majors straight out of Kipling. Full of apothecaries to the 32nd Gordon Highlanders and wives of adjutants who died in their twenties after burying their infant children.

Here lie Oswald Chard and Hardwicke Holderness. Cubitt Sparkball Rundle and the Rev John Nepomuk Merk. Here, too, a man killed by a bear and a lot of people killed in a 1905 earthquake that brought Dharamsala's popularity with the British to a rapid close. The town has enjoyed a

revival in recent years. Rich Indian couples who no longer go to Kashmir for their honeymoon come here instead. Flash new hotels have been thrown up to cater for them. In their designer leisure wear, the honeymooners mix uneasily with the Tibetans and the would-be Tibetans.

For all the changes, some of the old magic lingers. At sunset, the Himalayas glow pink and seem to float on purple clouds. On starry nights, the moonlight glistens on the snowy mountains. The views, says the guidebook, are so stunning that colonial Brits "went into raptures over them". But then, the hills are very steep round here.

How to get there and where to stay

□ The author flew to Delhi with Air India (return flights from £440), booked through Trailfinders (0171-958 3366). Swissair (0171-434 7300) offers flights from £373. British passport holders need a visa.

□ Dharamsala is most easily reached from Delhi: by bus, the journey takes up to 13 hours and the fare is about £2; the train from Delhi to Pathankot takes about 11 hours and costs around £2 — then comes a three-hour bus journey to Dharamsala (fare 50p). A taxi from Delhi costs about £60 and is far more comfortable.

□ In Dharamsala, a double room at the Dhauladhar Hotel costs about £14 a night. The hotel is comfortable, well-run and has superb views of the mountains from its terrace. Travellers on a tight budget will find many guest houses that charge as little as £2 a night.

□ For further information about Dharamsala, contact the Government of India Tourist Office, 7 Cork Street, London W1X 1PB (0171-437 3677).

Mirrors reflect a glorious past

On my first visit to India a year ago, we hurried round Rajasthan's golden triangle — Delhi, Agra and Jaipur — within four days. The India of the mogul emperors offers magnificent sights. It is an exhilarating experience — but joining the hectic tourist shuttle, especially after an overnight flight and death-defying drives along India's roads, is draining.

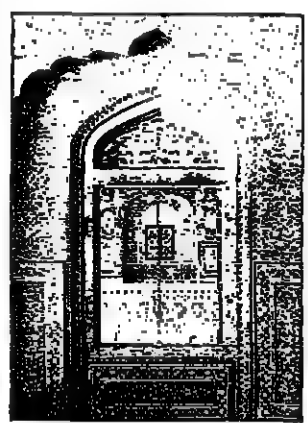
My second visit last week was a gentler and more evocative introduction to Rajasthan. Within 12 hours of leaving London, we were relaxing at a 15th-century fort-palace above the village of Neemrana after a two-hour drive from Delhi. Since it is concealed in the Aravalli ranges, you cannot even see the Neemrana Fort-Palace from the main Delhi-Jaipur road a mile away. It is one of India's secrets — a series of stepped palaces sprawling across three acres of hillside, with 35 rooms, each overlooking arid plains dotted with small hills.

After a night in economy, this is undoubtedly the way to start an Indian holiday, offering an opportunity to relax and absorb the unhurried Indian way of life. At Neemrana, all is tranquillity. There are no phones, the fax doesn't work, there is no room service and the supply of water and electricity is erratic. "While the generators are switched on when the necessity arises, guests are requested ... to switch centuries by using candles and lanterns," says the management, adding, in a touch of Pawley Towers, that the "minor inconveniences" may include not being able to find their room.

When they do, however, they are magnificent, each with a balcony or terrace, an ample supply of candles and with green parakeets swooping to the parapets. Don't go to Neemrana, however, if your boredom threshold is low. There is nothing to do here but stand and stare, enjoy the terraced gardens of bountiful villas, admire the palace of breezes, walk across the plain to the nearby 18th-century

well, or visit the village below. An alternative first-day stop-over, four hours from Delhi, is Samode, another hideaway, a Disneyesque, 18th-century yellow palace, approached through a massive gateway.

There is much more to admire at Samode, 25 miles from Jaipur. The highlight is the Sheesh Mahal. Samode's palace of mirrors, its walls and ceiling exquisitely decorated with convex mirror glass and red and yellow glass set in plaster, interspersed with murals — as stunning, say experts, as the more famous



Exquisite frescoed walls in the Samode Palace

Sheesh Mahal at Jaipur's Amber Palace. The red Durbar Hall below is decorated with paintings and gilding. Both are hauntingly beautiful.

After the solitude of Samode or Neemrana, you are much better prepared to race round the golden triangle.

BRIAN MACARTHUR

□ The author was a guest of *Graves Travel* (0171-487 9111), which organises tailor-made tours of India. The six-day trip, excluding flights, costs from £690 pp based on two sharing. □ He flew with British Airways — return flight to Delhi costs from £414. □ By British standards, even five-star hotels in India are relatively cheap. Rooms at Neemrana range from £30 to £50 accommodating three or four, to £100 for a deluxe suite for four, with dinner for £7. Similar prices operate at Samode.

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ETHIOPIA: Neither disease nor danger deters the excitement of an expedition through remote valleys

At the mercy of warriors and wilderness

Why do you take *Jarane* (foragers) there? They will surely die, the road is very bad," cried a passing Bodi tribesman. "It's no problem," our guide replied. "These *Jarane* are very strong." But within hours I felt the first shivers of malaria fever and was anything but strong. Such was my introduction to the Omo River Valley in south-west Ethiopia.

A friend, Ben Freeth, and I were travelling by foot with mules and donkeys from the Ethiopian highlands to the southern end of Lake Turkana in Kenya. Awarded a travelling fellowship by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, I was on an expedition through a remote area which promised some of the most varied and adventurous country in Africa. For ten weeks we lived a dream, detached from our contemporary existence, and witness to a land of magnificent natural beauty and exotic nomadic tribes.

The journey began in the green, densely forested uplands near Jima, where jagged, shrouded hills and valleys are alive with colorful monkeys, birds and butterflies. Towering trees dripped with a suddenness far from our preconceptions of Ethiopian droughts. At times our animals would disappear into mud so thick that they struggled to get free.

Guided by three local men, we picked our way along many pathways often concealed by tall grass and on near impossible gradients. Our first attempted route to reach the Omo led us down the Sheno River Valley to a remote and eerie river colony nesting beneath a cliff from which a hot spring waterfall flowed. The Koma believed this water had healing qualities and bathed regularly but, on seeing the extent of some of their defilements, we were not so convinced and were keen to avoid it as soon as possible.

Our guides, however, were not so lepers that no human waste existed and refused to let any further with us. We were, nonetheless, determined to try to find a route and continued alone

through a band of thick forest to what seemed more encouraging open country. However, after hours forcing passage through a sea of never-ending, razor-sharp elephant grass, we admitted defeat, with no option but to retrace our steps to the highlands.

We then began a ten-day detour with new guides, following paths along an undulating escarpment ridge which afforded some spectacular views over the uninhabited valley 6,000ft below. Eventually, a descending track was found and, with morale high, we entered the lowlands for a second time. It was on reaching the valley floor, with the warning words of the tribesman echoing, that I lay weak with malaria, surrounded by near-naked warriors heavily armed with Kalashnikovs. We were among the nomadic inhabitants of the Omo Valley.

The hot savannah lowlands are home to several tribes who wander the valley with their cattle and who still cling to ancient and, to us, sometimes bizarre traditions. Their societies have been protected from external influence by recent political turmoil and, perhaps more so, by a reputation for savagery that continues to drive fear into their highland neighbours. This reputation is fuelled by regular inter-tribal clashes, where modern automatic weapons have recently replaced Stone Age instruments of war.

Warriors, scarified with ornamental pride for each killed in battle, sat expressionless around our camp, content to watch us for hours. We had been advised to travel through this area with an armed escort.

However, being armed with only bolt-action rifles, it was no surprise when our three men decided that they had travelled far enough from their highland home and would go no further.

We were left to fend for ourselves for six weeks as we continued south through the open plains to the west of the river. Wandering through these classic grassland plains, the torchlight. Fortunately, they remained wary, and as we began to light fires and dangle them with light, they drifted away into the darkness.

Occasionally we came to a village, consisting of domed, temporary shelters surrounding enclosures for livestock. Here, we would try to buy milk, or a goat to eat as a welcome addition to a basic supply of rice, maize and wheat flour carried with us. Although the inhabitants were instinctively wary of us, we were at no time aware of any real hostility and felt privileged to be among these colorful and fascinating people.

It struck us how vulnerable their valley was to the wind of change which gusts through fragile social, cultural and environmental enclaves throughout the continent. There was a life-style on the brink of that change and we could only guess at how long they and the surrounding wildlife would remain unaffected.

Farther south, our journey involved crossing the Omo River. Renowned for its man-eating crocodiles farther north, we were amazed to come to a point where we were assured that crocodiles were never seen. We and our animals swam across unhindered. Now east of the river, the plains became more arid and the character of our journey darkened as our concerns focused increasingly on access to water. The river was impossible to reach, hidden by an impenetrable thicket as it meandered towards Kenya. We had to rely on directions

from tribesmen to find water points. As temperatures soared and our animals began to suffer, we took to marching at night under a full moon.

At this stage, illness again took its toll and, with dysentery, we were both stretched to our physical limits, having to walk up to 11 hours a day to reach water.

The animals also found this part of the journey exhausting and, before crossing the border and reaching Lake Turkana, we had lost two donkeys to the harsh desert conditions.

The lake ended our water troubles. With relief we marvelled at the immense body of water surrounded, in contrast, by vast desert and stunning lava deposits. The final two weeks made riverbank walking as we followed the flamingo-fringed lake shore. The Siboi National Park, with game grazing along a narrow grass belt separating lake from desert, and we were often accompanied by herds of zebra or topi antelope staring in curiosity at our animals.

The fossil riches of the area are well recognised and we noticed fragments of fossilised bone strewn for miles over the black lava fields. In this area live the Turkana, again a people almost unchanged for centuries. Adorned with decorative colour, they lead a frugal existence, tending goats and camels.

Travelling through their timeless and dramatically barren land, our journey drew to an end. Here we felt we had reached a stage where the expedition had evolved from an exciting novelty to a life-style which we could have gladly continued indefinitely, echoing the words of T.S. Eliot:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

JAMES EGREMONT-LEE

A tip-plated woman from the Mursi tribe, who inhabit the Omo River Valley



A tip-plated woman from the Mursi tribe, who inhabit the Omo River Valley

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GAMES

25

CHESS

by Raymond Keene

THIS WEEK I conclude my coverage of the fascinating match between Kasparov and IBM's Deep Blue computer. Given the computer's ability to see over 500 million moves per second, one might compare this match to a weight-lifting contest between a human and a fork-lift truck. In this case, though, the human won.

With game five, the world champion at long last moved into the lead, but only after he had offered a draw and the computer had declined. I have often advanced the theory that the existence of the draw in chess will be a tremendous barrier to computers ever demolishing human champions. The best human players are capable of playing perfectly in certain situations, so, in order to win, computers (or their human handlers) will occasionally be obliged to take risks.

That is exactly what occurred in this game. The IBM team, following consultation with their grandmaster assistant, Joel Benjamin, decided to decline Kasparov's offer. Unfortunately for the computer, White had no real advantage, and during the middlegame Deep Blue, bereft of an obvious plan, began aimlessly moving its queen backwards and forwards. Kasparov swiftly seized his opportunity, hurried forwards his king-side pawn and smashed through White's defences.

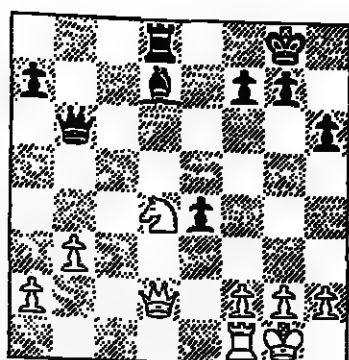
White: Deep Blue
Black: Kasparov
Philadelphia, Feb 1996
Scottish Game

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. Bc4 Bc5 4. d4 exd4 5. Qxd4 Qd6 6. Nc3 Nc6 7. Bg5 Nd7 8. Qf3 Nf6 9. Bxf6 gxf6 10. Bg5 Qe7 11. Qd3 Bg7

This bishop retreat, prevents Bxf6 shattering Kasparov's pawns. A similar pawn structure weakness had cost him the first game.

12. Re1 Re8 13. Ne2 Ne4 14. Bf4 Bf5 15. Nd4 Nf6 16. Qd3 Qd6 17. Qc4 Qc5 18. Qd4 Bf7 19. Qd5 Qd6 20. Qd6 Qd5 21. Qd5 Qd6 22. Bxf4 Qd6 23. Bf5

White resigns.



Here Kasparov offered the draw that was refused. This was unwise, since Black has fully equalised and even has some slight pressure against White's knight on d4.

"We were surprised by the offer so early in the game," said the IBM team-leader C.J. Tan. But experts saw no winning chances for Deep Blue. "We searched our souls and found scientists and not chess players," he said. "We wanted to continue the experiment."

Over the following few moves, Kasparov, to his surprise, succeeded in confusing Deep Blue. Frederick Friedel, a chess computer expert, and consultant to Kasparov, diagnosed that Deep Blue had encountered a position that it had failed to understand. "Our job for the next few years is to find other positions that the computer doesn't understand," he continued.

White's queen-shuffling gives Kasparov an opportunity.

Black's majority on the king's flank has led to the creation of a passed pawn which now costs White a piece. The rest is easy.

34. g4 e10 35. f5 Qd6 36. Re3 Re8 37. Bf4 Bf5 38. Kf2 Kf6 39. Rg3 Rg6 40. Rf3 Rf6 41. Rf4 Rf7 42. Kf1 Rf8 43. Rf2 Rf7 44. Rf3 Rf8 45. Kf2 Rf7 46. Rf4 Rf8 47. Kf3 Rf7

White resigns.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene
This position is from the game Svensson - Podgorny, Germany 1933.
The white king is dangerously exposed on the queenside. How did Black capitalise in fine style? Black to play.

Send your answers on a postcard to The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday will win a British Chess Magazine publication. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1 Rxf6

1. Rxf6 2. Nf3 3. Bc4 4. d4 5. Qxd4 6. Nc3 7. Bg5 8. Qf3 9. Bxf6 10. Bg5 11. Qd3 12. Re1 13. Ne2 14. Bf4 15. Nd4 16. Qd3 17. Qc4 18. Qd4 19. Qd5 20. Qd6 21. Qd5 22. Bxf4 23. Bf5

1. Rxf6 2. Nf3 3. Bc4 4. d4 5. Qxd4 6. Nc3 7. Bg5 8. Qf3 9. Bxf6 10. Bg5 11. Qd3 12. Re1 13. Ne2 14. Bf4 15. Nd4 16. Qd3 17. Qc4 18. Qd4 19. Qd5 20. Qd6 21. Qd5 22. Bxf4 23. Bf5

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READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right). The cartoon, from the Punch Library, includes the contemporary caption.

The cartoon will be printed again next week on the Games page with a caption selected from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Cartoon caption (99), Weekend Games Page, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN

The editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, March 13.



"Darling... have you seen our pet tarantula?"

The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by Mr K. W. Davis, of Farnham, Surrey

PUNCHLINE



SOCIETIES WE ADMIRE BUT DO NOT BELONG TO: No. 7, The Ladies for the Birds of Prey and Bats from London Theatre.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

AMPERSAND

a. An ampere/1000
b. And
c. Predecessor of blotting paper

VIZ

a. A typeface
b. A masking letter
c. Namely

BASSARID

a. A foxy bacchanal
b. A female bass
c. A helmet crest

FAVELA

a. A young deer
b. Red-hot lava
c. A slum shack

Answers on page 20

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

IT IS as a writer that Terence Reese will be most remembered. He wrote more than 80 books on the game, including such classics as *Reese on Play* (1948), *The Expert Game* (1958) and *Play Bridge with Reese* (1960). The latter two came out when I was at university and I remember the excitement they generated in our bridge group. This quote from *Reese on Play* is still an admirable summary of what matters in good bridge: "Ability to execute brilliant coups counts for very little compared with the consistent effort to follow what is going on among all four hands; how the cards are distributed and where the tricks are coming from."

This is a hand from *The Expert Game*, in the chapter called "Hold it", which is about keeping control of critical side-suits. I give it as a defensive problem. You are West defending Four Spades. Reese doesn't give the bidding, merely stating that "after showing long diamonds, South played in Four Spades". A possible auction:

S P N E
1s Pass 2s Pass
2s Pass 2NT Pass
3s Pass 4s All Pass

Contract: Four Spades by South. Lead: queen of hearts

Reese and Boris Schapiro defended this hand in the Masters Pairs (*The Expert Game* doesn't reveal which way round they sat).

West ducked the king of diamonds, and the queen, and East ruffed the third round. Now East completed a great defence by playing a fourth round of hearts.

A trump or a club would have enabled South to ruff out the ace of diamonds and draw trumps. But after the heart South was helpless - he could not both establish the diamonds and draw trumps.

clarer follows again and trumps the third round with the ten of spades. South now plays the king of diamonds. How do you defend?

South almost certainly has a four-card spade suit and six diamonds. If you take the ace of diamonds he will be in control to draw trumps and run the diamonds, making four tricks in spades, five in diamonds and one in clubs. Even if you get that far, it isn't easy to see what you should do. You must duck, and duck the diamond continuation. Then your partner ruffs the third round of diamonds. This is the full deal.

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COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott

and melodies in ever-changing musical styles and moods.

Few companies have released more pinball titles in the last two years than 21st Century, though only its more recent games have

lyrics, interviews and other memorabilia to please those hankering for the nitty-gritty low-down of the rock product 21 years on. Alternatively, Ken Russell's bleak movie of the opera is out on CD and stars Ann-Margaret, Roger Daltrey, Oliver Reed, Jack Nicholson and, by far the best thing in it, Elton John's timeless Pinball Wizard performance.

Also on CD is *The Who - Thirty Years of Maximum R&B Live* which features 28 live Who performances, although not all of them are especially well known.

Elton John is one of the 70 artists featured on MTV Unplugged. From Viacom New Media on PC and Mac CD-Rom, this is a disappointing database hooked into the channel's acoustic TV series. You can access resumes of artists, details of their appearances on the show and even hear a few familiar song chords. Some complete performances can also be played, but invariably not the ones you'd most like to hear such as, say, Elton's.

Unravelling Cyberspace Twenty-Two should be music to your ears

been worth buying. However, by the summer the company plans to release the Pinball Construction Kit, which will at least allow players to design their own tables from more than 60 basic themes.

The official Tommy spin-off is due shortly from Interplay. Tommy: The Interactive Adventure, on PC and Mac CD-Rom, is an interactive exploration of the opera, featuring album, movie and theatre show snippets as well as

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A Tommy revival fuels pinball mania

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No 3348: Pay In The End by Owzat

STARTING from the top row, 10 words (5) squares) positionally represent an expedition. There's little problem initially (three items, unclued), something admittedly revolutionary (one item, to be shaded), varyingly unstable but not unwelcome transport (three items to be shaded) and the final row is completely unchecked (three items, unclued). Two unclued lights are not normal words. Letters not cross-checked in unclued lights make PET MAP.

Finally, two five-letter answers (one a down word, followed by another across) should separately be arranged into the actual destination and placed below the grid. Chambers 1993 is recommended but does not have one place-name and one proprietary name.

ACROSS

- 11 Discs about would mostly stimulate like stink (7)
- 14 Baked crab? (5)
- 15 To the whole of Canadian province, a letter of protest (4)
- 16 A yard behind, fuzzy was on a roll (5)
- 18 Bankrupt not without a bob once (4)
- 19 Chef's thickening (4)
- 20 Boycon, perhaps is king in local area (4)
- 21 Drivers try to introduce uncertainty like splits (5)
- 22 Triple crown for England in sport (4)
- 23 It's put last in designating language? (7)
- 24 Seedy club also about right (5)
- 25 "Sole" without its final letter is a coin (5)
- 27 Sped out of bounds - then hole in one (3)
- 28 Spirit is strong in game (5)
- 29 Pant! (5)
- 30 Clean bowled guy hanging around (7)
- 31 Regularly very dense cyclones have them (4)
- 32 More moist pedal (5)
- 33 Doris's tongue is cutting in informal conversation (4)
- 34 Large fish in shed is mottled (4)
- 41 Ham backing off satellite (4)

DOWN

- 1 Confusion; unwanted items (6)
- 2 Precursor (9)
- 3 Decisive juncture (6,2,5)
- 4 Site, position (5)
- 5 Indian honorific - Lanka (3)
- 6 Sailor friend of Olive Oyl (6)
- 7 One from Tripoli (6)
- 12 Soft (service) hat; stone me! (6)
- 14 To clean (car engine) (6)
- 15 Sea-mammal; type of moustache (6)
- 16 Spirit; quality of character (6)
- 18 Make void (5)
- 21 Edgar Allen - (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 725

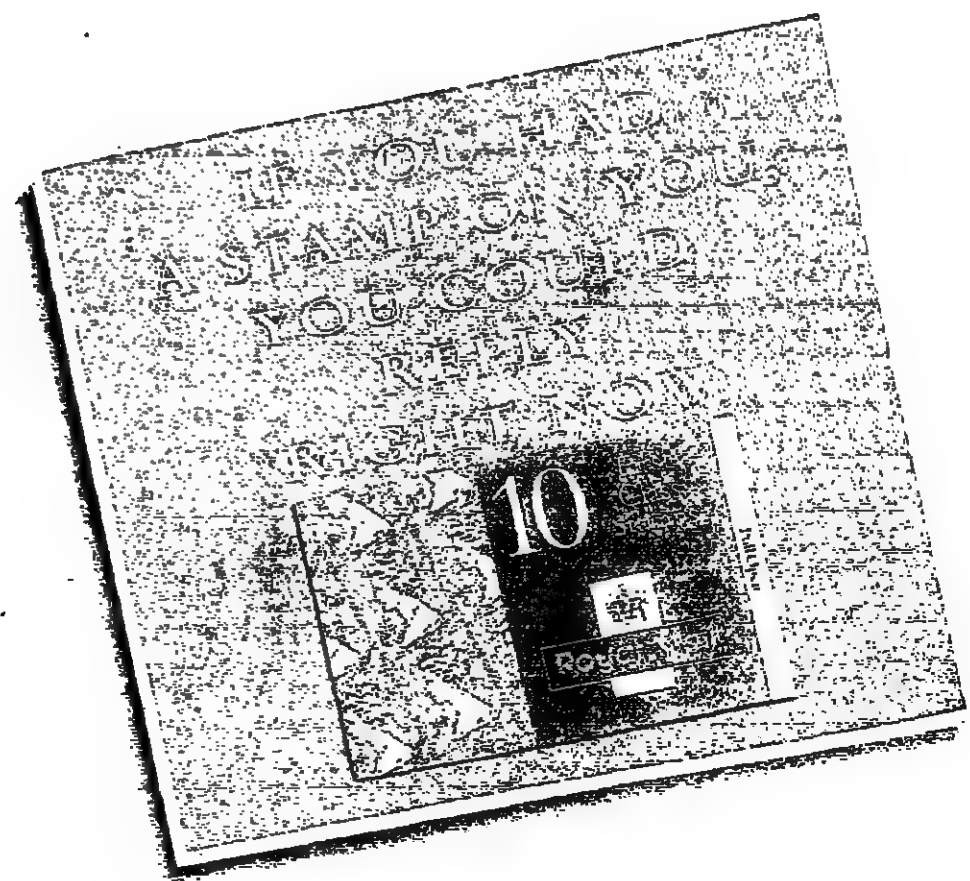
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DOWN: 1 Red-hot 2 Ples 3 Shelve 4 Boon 6 Fun and games 8 Delinquency 10 Byron 14 Civil 16 Demote 18 Tyrant 19 Dock 21 Lobe

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•**Good looking billionaire, 25,**
tall, own jet, nice hands, homes
around the world, loves yachting,
cooking and quiet nights in, hates
football, seeks girl next door to love,
cherish and shamelessly pamper.
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هكذا من الأصل



Daredevil
whose car
goes up
in a puff
of smoke

Page 7



Cars that
forever
blow
little
bubbles

Page 10



SATURDAY MARCH 9 1996

Vaughan Freeman finds the Formula One fans gearing up for the new season

Grand passions in the living room

The eyes are as steely as Michael Schumacher's in the seconds before he blasts off the grid and into the danger of the first high-speed bend in the grand prix at Melbourne tomorrow.

But these eyes beneath the neat, white helmet belong to Lorie Marsden... and she is in her living room in Hampshire. Lorie is one of the 300 million whose eyes will be glued to the first grand prix of the season, one of the fans of the most exotic form of sport on the planet, a world of machinery of such power and cost that it is remote from all but a few.

But fans like Lorie can dream. When she feels the grand prix urge, she dons her crash helmet and racing firesuit and heads for the garage. There she climbs into her pride and joy, an old and immobile Formula Ford 1600 once raced by Ferrari driver Eddie Irvine.

Lorie, who runs the Formula One Club, says: "I stick on my helmet and racing suit and sit in the car making all the right noises and moving the gear stick. You've got to do it, haven't you?"

Not all FI fans are as dedicated as Lorie, who is waiting only for the lottery win that will enable her to get Eddie's old car up and running. But then not everyone can claim to have raced an unknown Brazilian then known as Ayrton da Silva, better known in later life as Ayrton Senna.

Her home is named the Hawthorns after Britain's first FI world champion, Mike Hawthorn, and the front room is painted in British Racing Green to match the BRG leather suite. Pride of place, apart from the cabinet of racing memorabilia, goes to a wrought iron and brass petrol pump. The walls are hung with black and white photographs of heroes such as Graham Hill and Jim Clark.

Her partner, Tom, is also a race enthusiast and volunteer marshal at events. Lorie, an air traffic control assistant at West Drayton, is one of the small band of enthusiasts who run the driver and team support clubs in which fans of FI can get together.

The Formula One Club has 400 members, and as honorary Vice-Presidents has drivers David Coulthard, Eddie Irvine, Jan Magnussen, and Mark Blundell. Regular visits are arranged to FI headquarters, to testing days at Silverstone and outings to FI meccas such as Monza, Imola, and the Ferrari factory at Maranello. Membership costs £17.50 a year.

Lorie says: "My father used to take me to Goodwood. We lived the other side of the hill and could hear when an event was on. We went in his Jaguar Mark II and he would sit me on the bonnet and we would watch from over the fence."

"As soon as I passed my test, I went to Brands Hatch for racing lessons and got my licence. I have a photograph from 1980-81 with me on the Formula Ford 1600 starting grid at Brands with Ayrton



Eyes on the prize: "I stick on my helmet and racing suit and sit in the car making all the right noises and moving the gear stick. You've got to do it, haven't you?" says Lorie Marsden, who runs the Formula One Club

Senna — da Silva as he was then — ahead of me on the grid. Needless to say, I didn't get very close to him."

Domestic considerations, like buying a house, ended Lorie's racing career, but her passion for the sport lives on: "My father now writes wonderful articles for our newsletter on racing from the 1950s. My mother doesn't understand. She thinks I should be busy having children, even grandchildren, and my sisters don't understand it either."

"Grand prix fans aren't like football supporters who can go to a match and meet the same people in the same part of the ground. Our club means people can make contact and go together to races or meet up once they are there."

Annette Jones, 27, who runs Club Gerhard Berger, also caught the grand prix bug from her father: "I always watched the races with my Dad, watching people like Mario Andretti." A friend introduced her to the Benetton team, which gave her access to the glamour and excitement of the pit lanes, and the addiction to Formula One was confirmed. But why Berger? An-

nette, an accounts clerk, explains: "He stood out after his accident at Imola in 1989. I noticed him after that and thought how brave, or stupid, he was to carry on, and I have followed his career ever since. "It isn't like a Take That fan club. As a person he is fun, he comes across as shy when he is in a group, but in fact is very jovial and very pleasant."

Other drivers, it seems, do little for her: "I don't like Damon Hill, and while I admire Schumacher, who as a driver is I think on a level with Ayrton, as a personality he's nowhere near him."

Annette tries to get to three grand prix races a year, usually Monaco and Silverstone for sure, and if possible one other, which in the past has included Estoril in Portugal and the Belgian at Spa. As with the Formula One Club, the Club Gerhard Berger (membership £15 a year), is a sociable set-up; members meet regularly for events, as well as to meet their hero at their annual meeting held over a barbeque at Silverstone.

Sara Richards, with three



Lorie at home — the house is named Hawthorns, not after the tree but the driver

grown-up daughters, has just set up the Martin Brundle Supporters' Club. She says: "It's not like a groupie thing or anything. I go back to when Mike Hawthorn was the hero for every schoolgirl, and then it was James Hunt. I've been

interested in Formula One for a long time and always followed the British drivers, and what's wrong with that? The whole thing is escapism, and not real life. It gets you away from the humdrum."

The FI fascination is global.

David Hayhoe runs the Grand Prix Contact Club, which has 400 members in 35 countries who make regular contact via the club's newsletter and membership list, all part of the £7 annual fee. Members are keen sellers and

swappers of books, autographs, stickers and models. Indeed anything that has the remotest link with Formula One. "Fans tend to be a very partisan crowd," David says.

It is these allegiances, he adds, that are reflected in their clubs of choice. "The fans tend to go very much for certain drivers, either for or against. In the 1980s, for example, everyone was pro or anti Mansell, or pro or anti Senna. Today they are pro and anti Hill, or pro and anti Schumacher, and whether or not the fans are German or British seems to have little to do with it."

Whatever their feelings, the certainty is the astonishing magnetism of Formula One racing. Whether it is in the back streets of Rio or the leafy drives of Hampshire, you can bet that the lights will be going on in the early hours of tomorrow morning as the addicts get ready to switch on and settle down for a fix of their favourite drug: the sight and sound of a grand prix.

The Formula One Club, 10 Fairway Close, Liphook, Hampshire, GU30 7XD. 01428 722765. Club Gerhard Berger, 3 Bluebell

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Jonathan Palmer's grand prix guide

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This season's cars and their drivers

PAGE 5
Win £10,000 in our FI contest

FANTASY DRIVE

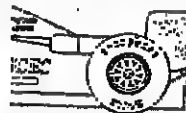
Close, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7NY. 01938 555149.
Martin Brundle Supporters' Club, Glenham, Cleeve Road, Coring-on-Thames, Reading, RG8 9BJ. 01491 522296.
Grand Prix Contact Club, 26 Broom Road, Shirley, Croydon CRO 9NE. 0181-777 4835.

11 16 circuits

winners

NDA

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Diniz
Brazilian
GP starts: 17
Poles: 0
Wins: 0
Points: 0
Age: 25



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Coulthard
British
GP starts: 25
Poles: 5
Wins: 1
Points: 63
Age: 24



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You'll enjoy driving a Mercedes. The last owner did.



Mercedes-Benz
Used Cars

BBC commentator and ex-Formula One driver **Jonathan Palmer** opens his guide to the 1996 grands prix...

Pick of the crop from a vintage season

In six years of commentating for the BBC, never has it been so difficult to predict the pattern of competitiveness of drivers and teams of a Formula One season. The excitement from both those on the inside and the enthusiast is tremendous, with the competition reckoned to be closer than ever.

That has nothing to do with the changes in the cars, for these are minimal. Engine size remains at 3-litres, weight is similar and minor restrictions on extra wings will not prevent the new cars from being even faster than last year's.

The intrigue comes from the many changes of drivers between teams. The performance of each team's cars can be expected to be broadly the same as last year, in terms of being front running, mid-grid or at the back. However, the drivers make a modest but vital difference to the exact qualifying or race position of a given car.

The fascination is intense because, until the first grand prix of the season, no pattern exists of driver and team results. During winter testing, teams are checking their new cars for reliability and trying to understand how to fine tune the suspension and aerodynamics to optimise the basic design. In the process, some are more concerned than others at setting fast lap times for press excitement and sponsor encouragement.

Only at the first race can they be truly compared. The grid positions for tomorrow's Australian Grand Prix should have been determined in the 60-minute qualifying session that finished at 3am today. After months of posturing and conjecture, we have the facts.

Once again, I expect Williams to be the team to beat, continuing years of domination from superb, stable engineering and a great Renault engine. Damon Hill continues for his fourth season, frustrated that, despite having a faster car last year, he was beaten to the title by Schumacher. He starts favourite for the championship. He is quick, determined, experienced and probably in the best car again.

While Schumacher in a Benetton was Hill's problem last season, this year it could be his new team-mate, Jacques Villeneuve. The 24-year-old Canadian has made it clear he intends to beat Hill. With a pedigree that includes being the son of the late Ferrari driver, Gilles, and current Indy car champion (America's

PALMER'S KNOWLEDGE

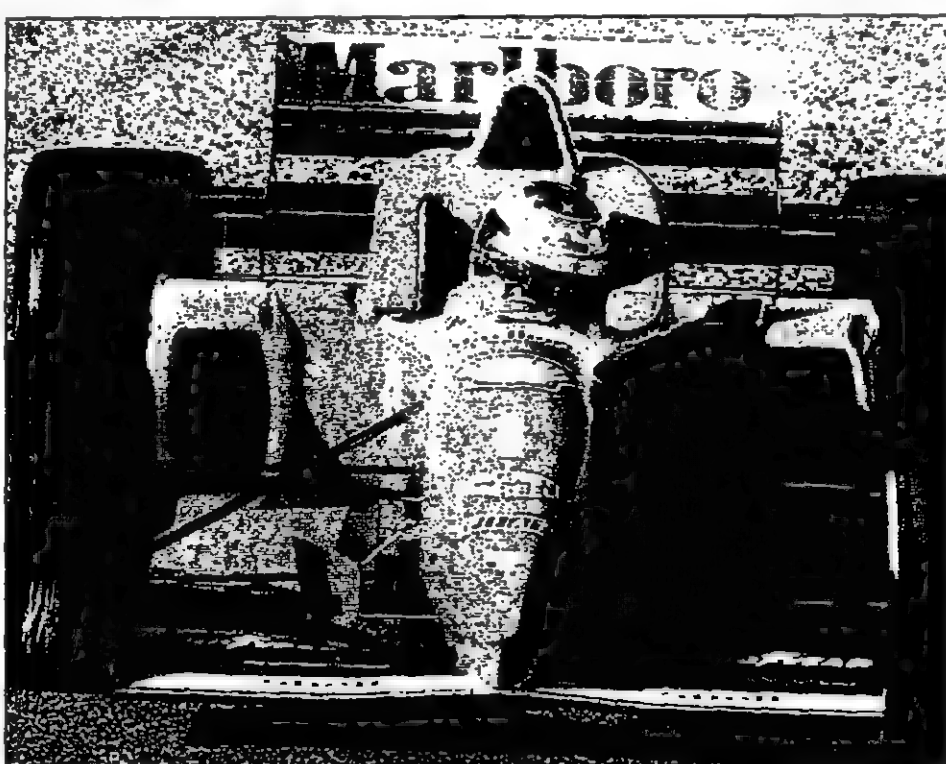
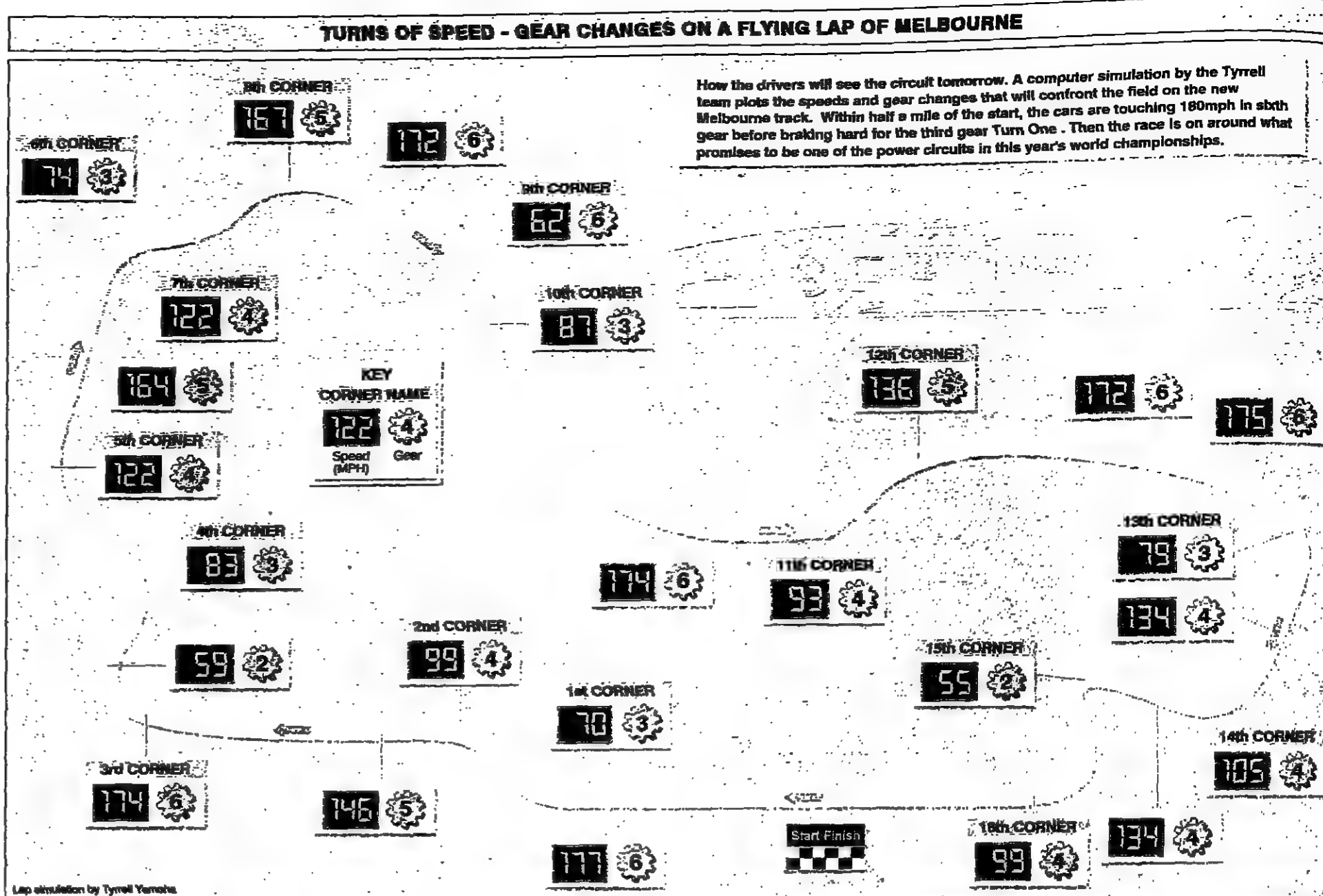


answer to Formula One), he should be taken seriously.

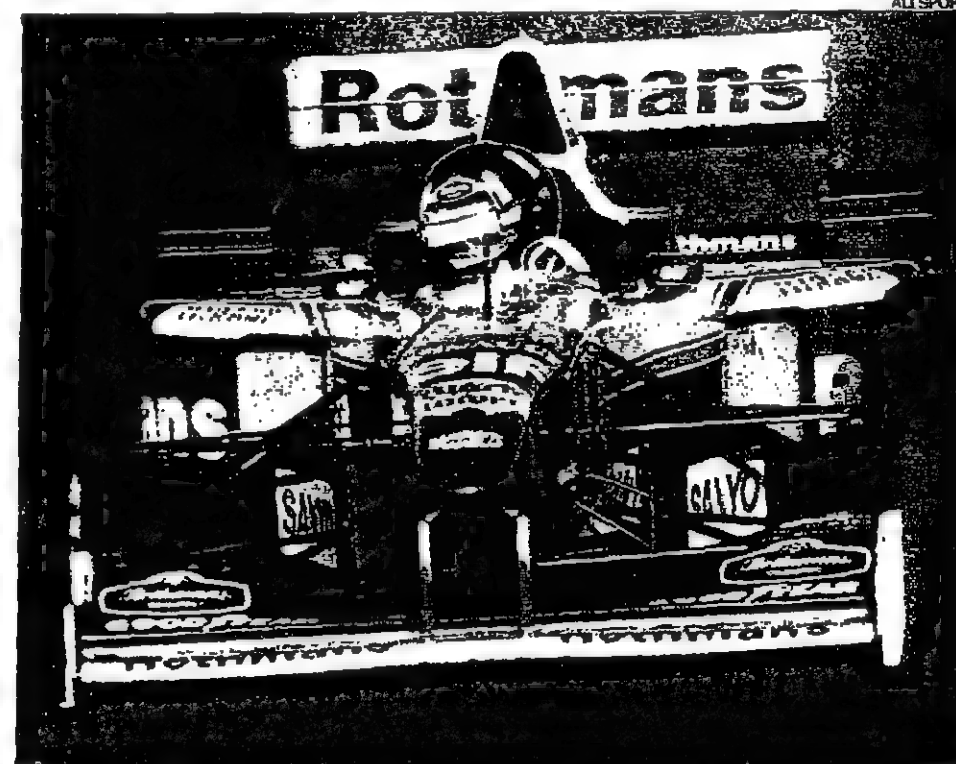
Another team pairing in the spotlight is at McLaren Mercedes, where Mika Hakkinen continues for a third season, joined by Hill's ex-team mate David Coulthard. The importance of dominating a team-mate cannot be overestimated, and following Hakkinen's appalling accident at Adelaide just four months ago, I might have expected the Scot to have been established as McLaren's dominant driver over the winter. However, everyone is hugely relieved that Mika's serious head injuries have recovered to the extent that he appears to be as stunningly quick as he was.

Michael Schumacher is apparently not a happy man — extraordinary for someone earning a reputed £16 million this year. But the problem is his new Ferrari, which was very late being completed and unreliable even when it did run. Ferrari perennially claim their forthcoming season's target is just to win a couple of races and then the championship the following year, surely a defence strategy with which to deflect potential press criticism.

Eddie Irvine has hardly driven the new car, and will have to work hard to maintain his cool when all around him are focusing on his team-mate. Schumacher will surely continue to be F1's best driver, but it will be interesting to see how he copes with the lack of reliability, and, to a lesser extent, pace, I anticipate. Ability shines when confidence and morale are high, and I suspect the German will have to



Two men in the fastest lane: last year's champion, Michael Schumacher, left, in his Ferrari, and Damon Hill, favourite to scoop the title in 1996, at the wheel of his Williams Renault



handle the sight of someone else doing well this year.

That someone could be Jean Alesi, now in Schumacher's old seat at Benetton, along with his old Ferrari partner Gerhard Berger. Both will find new motivation from Benetton's likely reliability after years of resignation to Ferrari's record of retiring from most races. My money though goes on Alesi, who never gives up, though he has been criticised for only having won a single race after seven years of trying. In truth, he has never had a car with speed and reliability to do so, and while Berger has won nine races, over the past three years

at Ferrari he too has only won one.

Beyond the traditional top four teams, Jordan looks the most promising. Martin Brundle's experience and Barrichello's smooth style should make a good pairing to get the best out of the Peugeot engine chassis. Last year their sparring partners were McLaren, both teams now think they have moved on and up towards the Williams Benetton league. I rate Heinz Harald Frentzen second only to Schumacher, and he has stayed loyal to Sauber alongside Johnny Herbert. They should be right up there with Jordan, though early indica-

tions are it will take a while for the new Ford V10 engine to be truly competitive.

So how will new cars and the new driver pack fare on a track they've never seen before? The 3.27-mile Melbourne circuit has been constructed in the previously rundown Albert Park and looks very exciting. Unlike most street circuits, it includes some fast corners, which in F1 driver speak means around 140mph. As with all teams, Tyrrell Yamaha have a computer simulation to help them prepare the car for the new track — vital to predict gear ratios and wing settings.

The main start-finish

straight is only 800 metres long, but with around 700 brake horsepower, that's still sufficient to reach the circuit's top speed of 180mph in sixth gear, the V10 engines howling at up to 17,000rpm.

Just a two second job of the brakes will be enough to haul the car down to 70mph as the driver simply flicks his left hand flapper on the steering wheel three times for third gear. Accelerating through the right, into fourth and flat on the throttle to exit Turn 2 at 100mph. Fifth gear, sixth and 175mph again.

The corners should be really

nice to drive, often getting faster through a sequence as with Turns 3, 4, 5, taken in second, third and fourth gears respectively. Another beautiful series follows — but faster: taking Turn 8 at 170mph pulling 25G of cornering force will really sort the men from the boys.

The relatively gentle Turn 10 will be easily flat out at 175mph-plus, but even then the cornering force will be double that of a road car on the limit. But the most G — nearly 3 — is predicted for Turn 12, taken in fifth gear at about 140mph, before a couple of physically easier medium speed right handers before

Melbourne's slowest corner, Turn 15, down to 55mph in second gear. Up to third, turn right, fourth, flat on the accelerator, and through the last corner at 100mph. It has the makings of a truly great circuit. Fast, demanding and very hard work.

Overtaking is never easy, but likely spots are into Turn 1 and Turn 3. A surely vintage grand prix season could not have a better start. Look to Williams to win, with the safe money on Hill. But if Villeneuve wins his first grand prix he will match a feat only achieved once before, when Giancarlo Baghetti won the French GP for Ferrari in 1961.

In the small hours, we are with Murray Walker half a world away; tread softly, for you tread on our dreams

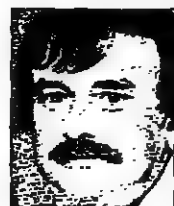
Wheels that spin our fantasies

Today the front page of Car 96 talks to people besotted with motor racing. But this is not the odd thing about them. The odd thing is that, unlike people who perm the hair of their dogs, they are by no means a weird minority.

Otherwise ordinary people, such as me, think nothing of getting up in the middle of the night to watch what a friend calls "200mph cigarette packets" career round a track on the other side of the globe. These circulating, hi-tech machines have as their permanent accompaniment a screaming, raucous engine which assaults the eardrums and irritates the saner people beyond measure. It is called Murray Walker.

Many of the races turn into a procession after the first few frantic laps, yet the largest worldwide television audience for any regular event will be glued to the satellite feed from Melbourne. Why? Formula One is a strange world which has invented for itself a spurious tradition. For example, Frank Williams has had a team for

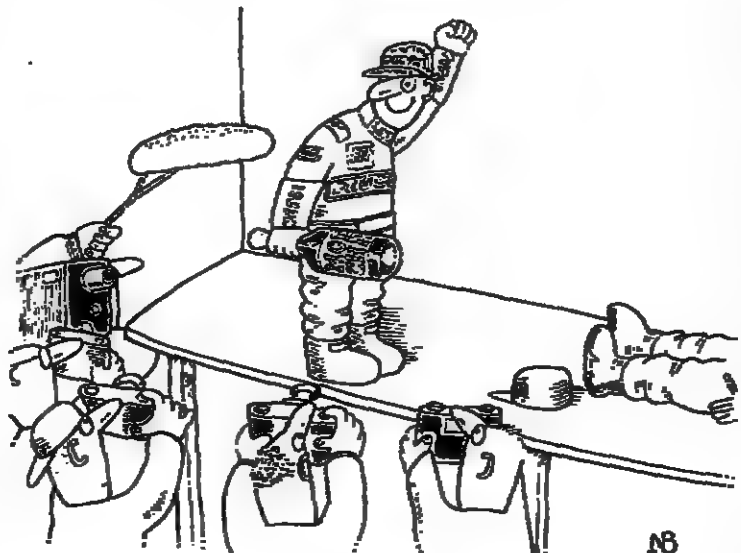
DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

only a couple of decades yet his headquarters at Didcot boasts a "museum" of F1 cars.

This tradition is not as odd as it sounds, for the roots of F1 and its popularity lie in ancient times, in a combination of myth, legend and reality. They grow, these roots, from the age of the single combat warrior. Older civilisations, being less enlightened than us, did not drop bombs on civilian populations in times of conflict. Instead, they chose



their finest exponents of the fighting art and sent them forth: hence that Biblical mismatch, David v Goliath. Nowadays, most war is trade war except for internecine strife, and Britain v Germany has become a fight to attract a Toyota factory. That is better than bombing Dresden or Plymouth, but it is not very sexy. Walker commentating on the Galt round? Oh my GOOD-ness, here come the GER-mans, offering TAX breaks for machine TOOL makers

and they've WON, no they haven't, the BRITS have stunned the GER-mans with a SEN-sational extra FIFTY tonnes on haddock quotas. No, I don't think so, either. But Britain v Germany seen as Hill versus Schumacher is a very different matter. Formula One can therefore be seen as the most international of sports which is nonetheless crucially nationalistic. And it is the men, not the teams, for whom we wave the flags. I would bet

that there is not a single sporting occasion where the red white and blue is so much in evidence as at Silverstone for the grand prix.

Let's face it: we Brits do not much like foreigners. Schumacher v Hill is the epitome of the nationalist tendency in our enjoyment of sporting contests. The blond arrogant German against the dark, chisel-jawed Brit. Hints of nasty, Germanic practices in the bends.

Formula One is also the ultimate in vicarious pleasure: these men live out our dreams. They drive better than we can ever hope to drive, but that does not prevent us doing racing changes as we leave Silverstone.

Where Schumacher-Hill confront 90mph chicanes, we confront traffic calming systems. Where Schumacher-Hill glance up from the track to see a board telling them where they are in the race, we sit on motorways fuming at boards which announce: "Delays possible for seven years."

Schumacher-Hill are what we would be, if only. If only there were no laws, no police, no traffic wardens, no other traffic on the road. The McLaren F1 supercar is cleverly named: it brings our dream tantalisingly close. If only we didn't have kids, dogs, school runs, ageing aunts, mortgages, the McLaren F1 is what we would be in. As it is, has anyone seen the keys to the Volvo yet?

GRAND PRIX NEWS IN BRIEF

Sale vroom

SOME OF the most beautiful and exotic cars in Melbourne will be at a Christie's sale, which includes a rare 1929 Bentley Speed Six Gurney Nutting coupé that could fetch £400,000. Two private collections go under the hammer and there are more exotic Bentleys and Rolls-Royces than you could shake a chequered flag at. In the sale are a 1912 London to Edinburgh Rolls, expected to make up to £300,000, and a 1930 Le Mans-style, 6½-litre Bentley open tourer at about £250,000.

Accelerating profits

AS MICHAEL Schumacher rifles through his pile of dollar bills this weekend, contemplating his £12.5 million contract with Ferrari, think of the poor drivers of the past before television and mega-sponsorship. According to Autocar, Jackie Stewart was paid £1.2 million for the 1973 season. Alain Prost £2.5 million in 1986, but Stirling Moss, that great but never-crowned world champion driver, only £31,000 in 1961.

Brits in pole position

FOR DINNER table botes, which nation provides the best Formula One drivers? Britain, of course. In spite of Schumacher's domination of the past two years and Senna and Prost, Britons have won 11 world championships, compared with eight for Brazil and five for Argentina... well, Juan Manuel Fangio actually, who won them all.

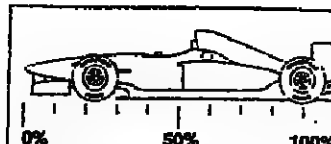
Use my car, old chap

IMAGINE this happening tomorrow: a leading driver stops and gives his car to his team-mate, who has broken down, to go on and win. Fanciful? Englishman Peter Collins did that at Monza in 1956 when he had a commanding position in the championship after two wins. Fangio's Ferrari broke down, so Collins willingly handed over his own, effectively ending his own chances of becoming Britain's first world champion.

... and Car 96 looks at the circuits, plus the teams that will line up on the grid in the 16-race championship

Of men, machines and the tracks ahead

FORM GUIDE: These are the runners and riders, but which drivers and cars will taste success in 1996, and which will have to go back to the drawing board?



KEY: Cars coloured according to victory chances: example Williams 100%, McLaren 50%

THE CIRCUITS: Facts and figures for all 16 circuits where battle takes place listed here. Match the drivers, the cars and the tracks to find winners

FORTI-FORD



22 Andrea Montecarlo
GP starts: 17
Wins: 0
Points: 0
Age: 31



23 Luca Badoer
GP starts: 29
Wins: 0
Points: 0
Age: 25



Chassis: Forti FG01-95
Designer: Giorgio Strano
Engine: Ford V8
Constructor's titles: 0
First GP: 1995

Montecarlo and Badoer will get used to the sight of tailpipes disappearing into the distance. Successful Formula 3000 and F3 team that discovered F1 too hard, even with £10 million to spend.

MINARDI-FORD



20 Pedro Lamy
GP starts: 18
Wins: 0
Points: 1
Age: 23



21 Taki Inoue
GP starts: 18
Wins: 0
Points: 0
Age: 32



Chassis: Minardi M198
Designer: Aldo Costa
Engine: Ford ED V8
Constructor's titles: 0
First GP: 1985

In racing for a decade and without so much as thank you for making up the numbers, Minardi is the car leaders' pass on their way to a chequered flag and this year should be no different. "Giancarlo Rizzoli will drive last GP."

FOOTWORK-HART



16 Jos Verstappen
GP starts: 15
Wins: 0
Points: 10
Age: 24



17 Ricardo Rosset
GP starts: 0
Wins: 0
Points: 0
Age: 27



Chassis: Footwork FA17
Designer: Alan Jenkins
Engine: Hart V8
Constructor's titles: 0
First GP: 1978

Former Schumacher-Benetton teammate, Jos Verstappen, should boost fortunes. Team will be seen since entering F1 in 1978 though and even talented Verstappen will find life at the bottom difficult.

LIGIER-MUGEN HONDA



9 Olivier Panis
GP starts: 33
Wins: 0
Points: 25
Age: 28



10 Pedro Diniz
GP starts: 17
Wins: 0
Points: 0
Age: 25



Chassis: Ligier JS43
Designer: Frank Dernie
Engine: Mugen-Honda V10
Constructor's titles: 0
First GP: 1978

Tom Walkinshaw car could be good, but the drivers? Panis never more than promising; teammate Pedro Diniz so far behind last year he could still be going around Adelaide circuit for all we know.

TYRRELL-YAMAHA



18 Ukyo Katayama
GP starts: 81
Wins: 0
Points: 5
Age: 32



19 Mika Salo
GP starts: 19
Wins: 0
Points: 5
Age: 28



Chassis: Tyrrell 024
Designer: Harvey Postlethwaite
Race wins: 23
Engine: Yamaha V10
Constructor's titles: 1
First GP: 1970

Great name but days of Jackie Stewart and world titles long gone. Seriously quick Mika Salo deserves chance to shine. Car reliability a bugbear, although Yamaha V10 could signal return to glory days. Let's hope so.

SAUBER-FORD



14 Johnny Herbert
GP starts: 80
Wins: 2
Points: 63
Age: 31



15 Heinz-Harald Frentzen
GP starts: 32
Wins: 0
Points: 22
Age: 28



Chassis: Sauber C18
Designer: Leo Ress
Race wins: 0
Engine: Ford V10
Constructor's titles: 0
First GP: 1993

Frentzen potentially great and Herbert's pedigree without question. Can car match the drivers? Cosworth V10 power in a compact chassis, so maybe first victory beckons for Sauber this year.

JORDAN-PEUGEOT



11 Rubens Barrichello
GP starts: 49
Wins: 0
Points: 32
Age: 23



12 Martin Brundle
GP starts: 142
Wins: 0
Points: 90
Age: 36



Chassis: Jordan 196
Designer: Gary Anderson
Race wins: 0
Engine: Peugeot V10
Constructor's titles: 0
First GP: 1991

Brundle's experience and extra year of work on unreliable Peugeot V10 could turn fortunes. Barrichello needs podium places for Jordan to break into the big leagues from 1995 sixth place.

MCLAREN-MERCEDES



7 Mika Hakkinen
GP starts: 83
Wins: 0
Points: 60
Age: 27



8 David Coulthard
GP starts: 25
Wins: 0
Points: 63
Age: 24



Chassis: McLaren MP4/11
Designer: Neil Oatley
Race wins: 104
Engine: Mercedes V10
Constructor's titles: 7
First GP: 1986

MP is the big word for McLaren. If the car is competitive, if Coulthard really is that good, if Hakkinen is fully recovered, the McLaren could be back with a vengeance to test Hill and return to winning ways.

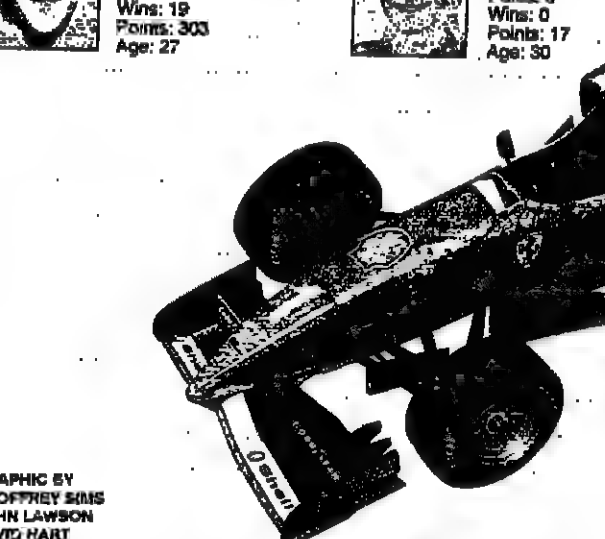
FERRARI



1 Michael Schumacher
GP starts: 69
Wins: 10
Points: 303
Age: 27



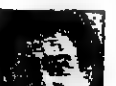
2 Eddie Irvine
GP starts: 32
Wins: 0
Points: 17
Age: 30



Chassis: Ferrari F310
Designer: John Barnard
Race wins: 105
Engine: Ferrari V10
Constructor's titles: 8
First GP: 1990

No more excuses. The best driver in the championship is demanding a reliable car to stand a chance of getting near to Williams and Benetton. Testing has not been very encouraging with the new V10 showing a distinctly Latin temperament-hot, fiery but liable to blow up. In Schumacher's hands, anything is possible. Ferrari, and British designer John Barnard, will be hoping it, to give the team its first world championship for 17 years.

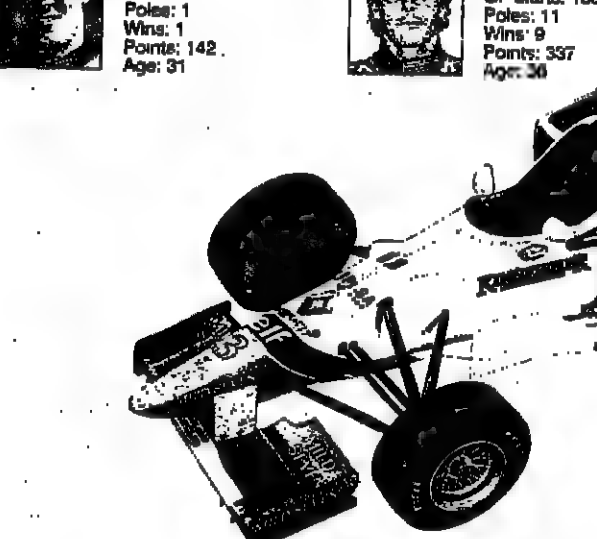
BENETTON-RENAULT



3 Jean Alesi
GP starts: 102
Wins: 1
Points: 142
Age: 31



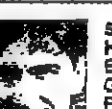
4 Gerhard Berger
GP starts: 180
Wins: 11
Points: 337
Age: 36



Chassis: Benetton B195
Designer: Ross Brawn
Race wins: 28
Engine: Renault V10
Constructor's titles: 9
First GP: 1981 (as Toleman)

Never forget Benetton: Williams don't. Schumacher might have gone but this car is proven machinery, with some minor aerodynamic changes for the start of the year, and now has the one driver just waiting to lead to stardom in Jean Alesi. His freeracer style allied to the guidance of experienced Gerhard Berger could be the surprise package of the season. If Alesi doesn't come out of 1995 covered in glory, it won't be for the want of trying.

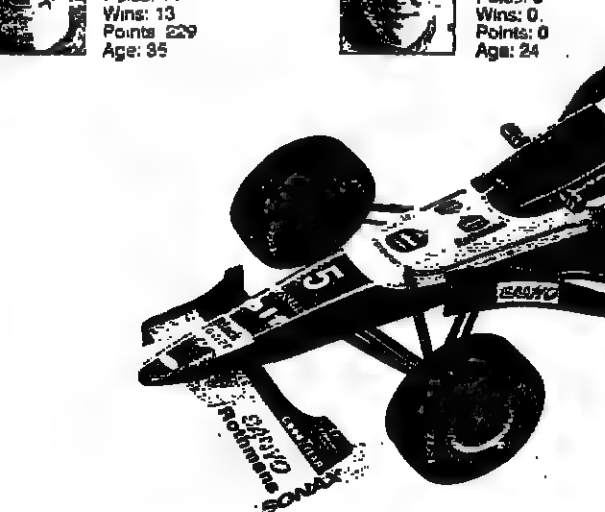
WILLIAMS-RENAULT



5 Damon Hill
GP starts: 51
Wins: 11
Points: 229
Age: 35



6 Jacques Villeneuve
GP starts: 0
Wins: 0
Points: 0
Age: 24



Chassis: Williams FW18
Designer: Patrick Head/Adrian Newey
Race wins: 63
Engine: Renault V10
Constructor's titles: 7
First GP: 1973

Now or never for Damon but once he's got his will to win and his exemplary record so far: 13 wins in 51 starts; that's 1 victory in every 3.9 races, better than anyone except Schumacher. Williams still likely to field the best car, and Hill's new partner, Villeneuve, should be on pace. If Hill can stay on the track and not be intimidated, the world championship beckons and Williams should get home as top constructor yet again.

THE NEW RULES FOR 1996

QUALIFYING
Drivers will have 2 hours free practice on Friday (Thursday in Monaco) between 11.00-12.00 and 13.00-14.00 and 15 hours on Saturday between 9.00-9.45 and 10.15-11.00. Maximum of 30 laps on each day. Official qualifying will be 1 hour on Saturday between 13.00-14.00, maximum of 12 laps. Tougher qualifying means drivers must not be more than 7% slower than pole position lap time. A spare car may be used in qualifying, but not in free practice. A 30 minute warm-up session will be held 4-5 hours before the race. Drivers may use up to 28 sets of tyres for the whole event. No limit on amount of fuel used, refuelling is allowed. Engine capacity is 3-litre, normally aspirated.

The cockpit sides have to be no more than 220mm below the line between the two roll structures. The driver's eyes must be above the cockpit sides. 1995 chassis do not have to adhere to this shape but must have high sides.

There is a minimum height of 640mm for the second roll structure.

Bodywork not permitted any more than 500mm from the car centre line.

Care must be taken with a means of disengaging the clutch if the car stops.

Variable length exhausts no longer permitted.

Fuel breather must close automatically if the car is inverted.

No composite cylinder heads or blocks, only steel to be used for crankshafts and crankshaft.

The front and top edges of the front wing end plates must be at least 10mm thick and have 5mm radius.

Headrests each side of the driver's head must be at least 75mm thick and 400mm2 in area.

Bodywork not permitted between 300 and 600mm above the reference plane.

THE GRAND PRIX CALENDAR AND CIRCUITS

AUSTRALIA

Melbourne, March 10



Race distance: 169.89 miles
53 laps of 3.274 miles
Lap record: to be established
Drivers will think twice around this circuit because it is first time for everyone. Melbourne has constructed a circuit especially to wrest the Australian from Adelaide and it promises to be fast and fun.

BRAZIL

Interlagos, March 31



Race distance: 190.77 miles
71 laps of 2.664 miles
Lap record: Schumacher 1m 18.455s, Benetton-Renault (123.315mph)
Spectacular vista but enough bumps on the track to worry a mumps victim. Plenty of quick corners and a wonderfully long straight that should provide plenty of opportunity for slipstreaming for the quickest cars.

ARGENTINA

Buenos Aires, April 7



Race distance: 190.08 miles
72 laps of 2.64 miles
Lap record: Schumacher 1m 30.523s, Benetton-Renault (105.24mph)
More curves than Liz Hurley, which could make it a Renault circuit where acceleration and handling count. Narrow and bumpy although it features the long and fast Ascari curve that drivers like it at 160mph.

EUROPE

Nürburgring, April 25



Race distance: 169.074 miles
67 laps of 2.822 miles
Lap record: Schumacher 1m 21.18s, Benetton-Renault (125.540mph)
Short straights make overtaking tricky and could turn this race into a procession longer than the Coronation. First to the first corner will be on a winner if he can stay reliable around the 2.8-mile circuit.

SAN MARINO

Imola, May 5



Race distance: 191.621 miles
63 laps of 3.122 miles
Lap record: Berger 1m 29.568s, Ferrari (122.25mph)
After death of Senna in 1994, now a safe but slow circuit with only the Piratella corner a high-speed 160mph. Should prove tough on brakes and drivers who will need to look for every overtaking opportunity.

MONACO

Monte Carlo, May 19



Race distance: 161.304 miles
78 laps of 2.068 miles
Lap record: Schumacher 1m 21.076s, Benetton-Renault (81.82mph)
They don't come any more romantic, but put Schumacher at the front here and it will need a tonne of dynamite to shift him from the lead. Overtaking at a premium. Glossy but too often a procession.

SPAIN

Barcelona, June 2



Race distance: 190.905 miles
66 laps of 2.937 miles
Lap record: Hill 1m 24.531s, Williams-Renault (125.08mph)
Decent top-speed straight and high-speed corners should make for overtaking and a Williams circuit. Schumacher won last year though and will want his Ferrari to take full advantage of the wide-open spaces.

CANADA

Montreal, June 15



Race distance: 189.943 miles
69 laps of 2.75 miles
Lap record: Schumacher 1m 28.927s, Benetton-Ford (111.907mph)
Perhaps the time for Jacques Villeneuve to win on the circuit, set on St Lawrence Seaway, named after his dad. Gilles. Two big chicanes are hard on the brakes but slow cars that get out in front could still do well.

FRANCE

Magny-Cours, June 30



Race distance: 184.608 miles
72 laps of 2.564 miles
Lap record: Mansell 1m 17.070s, Williams-Renault (123.355mph)
Power circuit, full with mix of high and low speed bends. Drivers don't like it because it demands precise set-up, one of Schumacher's best qualities. Should suit Williams team but pit stops cost the team dearly last year.

BRITAIN

Silverstone, July 14



Race distance: 191.68 miles
61 laps of 3.142 miles
Lap record: Hill 1m 27.100s, Williams-Renault (129.875mph)
Quick circuit being made quicker with some changes this year. Bags of fans and bags of excitement because circuit needs precise handling. Should be Hill's day if he can stay away from everybody else.

GERMANY

Hockenheim, July 28



Race distance: 190.53 miles
45 laps of 4.234 miles
Lap record: Coulthard 1m 46.211s, Williams-Renault (142.700mph)
All the way to 200mph through the tunnel of twisting trees trackside. Cars need power and low downforce but enough grip for the curves. Could be fun with plenty of partisan support for Schumacher.

HUNGARY

Hungaroring, August 11



Race distance: 185.805 miles
77 laps of 2.455 miles
Lap record: Mansell 1m 18.308s, Williams-Renault (113.949mph)
Worse than the M25 on a Monday morning. Qualifying important because tight, twisty track gives little opportunity to overtake. Pole position car should dictate race day if it can stay reliable through stop-start circuit.

BELGIUM

Spa, August 25



Race distance: 191.696 miles
44 laps of 4.334 miles
Lap record: Prost 1m 51.095s, Williams-Renault (140.42mph)
Fast and often wet. Spa is one of the best. High-speed straights and heavy braking into tough corners, so power and durability called for at track where Schumacher last year carved his way from 16th to win.

ITALY

Monza, September 8



Race distance: 191.01 miles
53 laps of 3.594 miles
Lap record: Hill 1m 23.575s, Williams-Renault (155.24 mph)
Ferrari's home turf with 200mph straights and tricky chicanes. Teams will be trying to sacrifice downforce to gain speed but must watch the setup through the kerbs and corners which took the field last year.

PORTUGAL

Estoril, September 22



Race distance: 192.339 miles
71 laps of 2.709 miles
Lap record: Coulthard 1m 22.446s, Williams-Renault (118.295mph)
Favourite test track which provides great racing. Bumps and dips with tight turns so speeds not great, helping to narrow the gaps between the best and not-so-best. Williams like it with Coulthard winning last year. This year?

JAPAN

Suzuka, October 13



Race distance: 192.92 miles
53 laps of 3.64 miles
Lap record: Mansell 1m 40.646s, Williams-Renault (130.332mph)
Last but not least, Suzuka could be decision-maker for the season. Long circuit with quick straights and a uphill curve so cars need plenty of power and a lot of tyre wear to a minimum.

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LISTED below right are eight groups of drivers racing in the 1996 Formula One season. The first race takes place in Melbourne tomorrow, but does not count towards our F1 Fantasy Drive game. Our points-scoring system starts with the Brazilian Grand Prix at Interlagos on March 31.

You can enter a F1 Fantasy Drive team to compete in the 15 grands prix for the £10,000 jackpot prize at any time between now and noon on Friday March 21 by selecting a total of eight drivers — one from each of the eight groups, A to H, listed right.

Once you have chosen your team fill out the coupon, far right, making a careful note of the two-digit code printed in bold for each of your selections. Please keep this coupon safe, you will need it as a record of your entry. Next ring our 24-hour entry line on 0891 40 50 32 (0044 990 100 332 in the Republic of Ireland). Calls last approximately five minutes. You will need a touchtone telephone to enter (most telephones with * and # keys are touchtone).

Follow the instructions on the entry line. You will be asked to nominate your eight (two-digit) selections in turn. You will then be asked to give your F1 Fantasy Drive team name together with your own name, address, postcode and daytime telephone number. You will receive a 10-digit PIN number as a confirmation of your entry. Please keep a record of this with your team details.

THE SCORING SYSTEM

1) **Qualifying points:** scored by drivers qualifying for the start of each grand prix within the first 20 positions on the grid: Pole position 20 points; 2nd 19; 3rd 18; 4th 17; 5th 16; 6th 15; 7th 14; 8th 13; 9th 12; 10th 11; 11th 10; 12th 9; 13th 8; 14th 7; 15th 6; 16th 5; 17th 4; 18th 3; 19th 2; 20th 1.

2) **Finishing points:** (as for qualifying points) scored by drivers for the top 20 positions at the end of every grand prix: 1st position 20 points; and in descending order to one point for 20th position.

3) **Lap points:** one point is scored for each lap completed in a grand prix.

4) **Improved position points:** three points are scored for each place improved from starting grid to finishing position in each race.

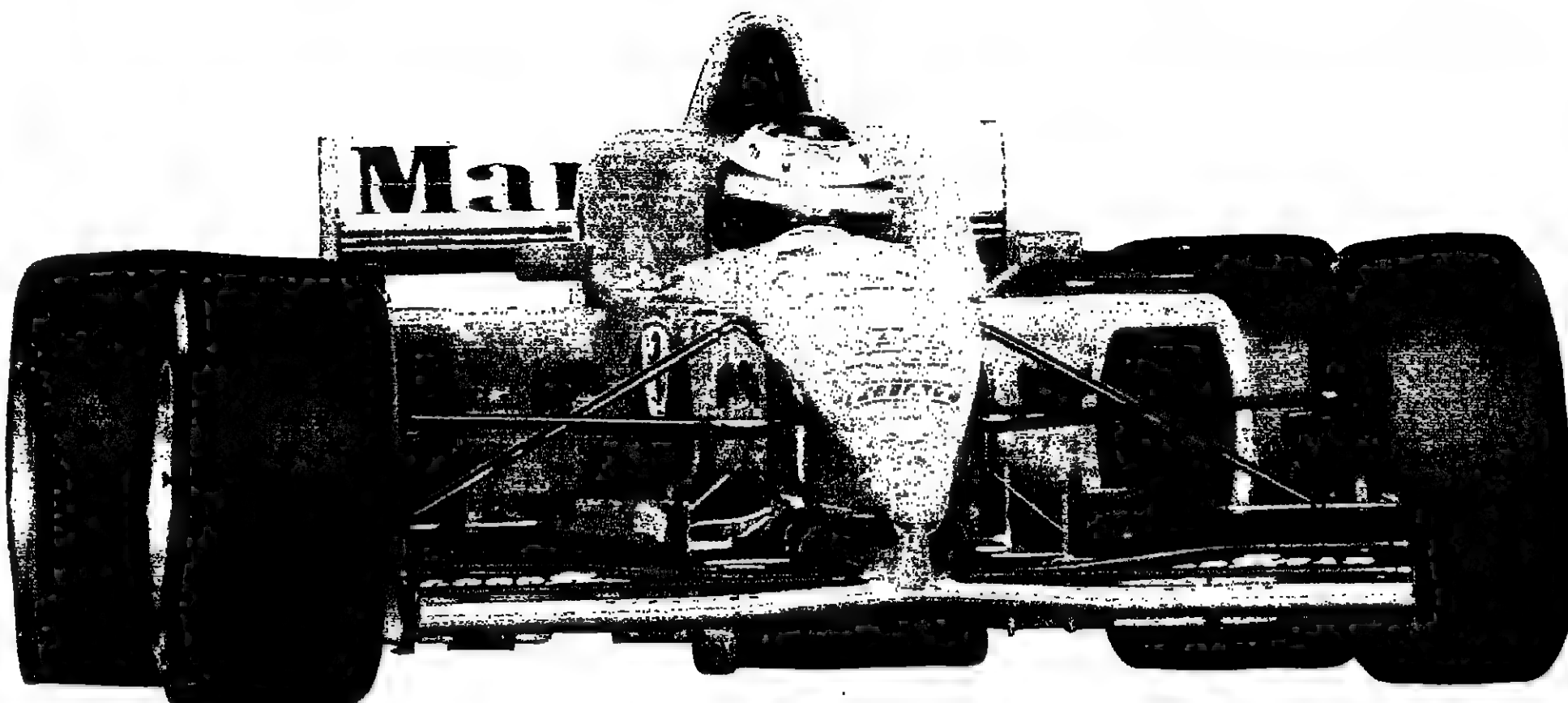
THE PRIZES

JACKPOT: The player with the top F1 Fantasy Drive team after the Japanese Grand Prix on October 13, 1996, wins £10,000.

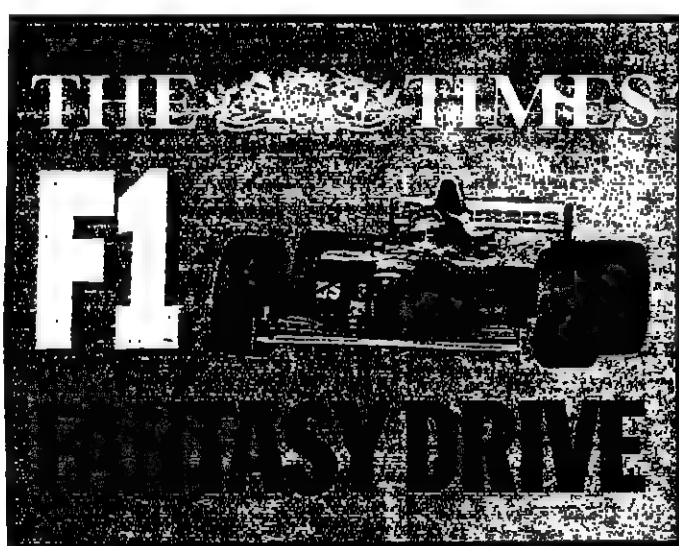
GRAND PRIX WINNERS: Prizes will be awarded to players whose F1 Fantasy Drive team scores the most points at each grand prix from March 31 to October 13, 1996. Prizes include a pair of VIP tickets to the British grand prix at Silverstone on July 14 for the winners of the Brazilian and Argentinian races.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1 Race results will be taken as those standing at midnight on the Sunday of each grand prix. 2 The rules of the FIA, as they affect The Times F1 Fantasy Drive, will apply in relation to points. 3 Changes of circumstance: If a driver is replaced, through death or injury, you will be deemed to have chosen the new driver; if a driver transfers to another team you will keep that driver as your selection. In both instances the driver is eligible for transfer should you wish to exercise this option. 4 In the event of one or more entrants having the same score at the end of the competition a tie-break will come into effect to decide the £10,000 prize winner. 5 In the event of more than one entrant having the same score for an individual race prize the winner will be selected at random. 6 The computerised record of your entry will be considered to be the entry. 7 Normal Times Newspapers rules apply and the editor's decision is final.



Michael Schumacher of Germany in his new Ferrari F310 during testing in Estoril, Portugal



● See our guide to the drivers and circuits in the 1996 Grands Prix on pages two and three, or see the Australian GP on BBC2 at 9.10am tomorrow and see at first hand how each driver is performing before making your selection.

MAKE ONE SELECTION FROM EACH OF THESE EIGHT GROUPS

GROUP A	GROUP C	GROUP E	GROUP G
01 M Schumacher	07 D Coulthard	13 M Salo	19 T Inoue
02 J Alesi	08 M Hakkinen	14 P Larry	20 R Rosset
03 D Hill	09 H Hentzen	15 P Diniz	
GROUP B	GROUP D	GROUP F	GROUP H
04 G Berger	10 M Brundle	16 U Katajama	21 L Badoer
05 E Irvine	11 R Barrichello	17 J Verstappen	22 A Montemini
06 J Villeneuve	12 J Herbert	18 O Panto	

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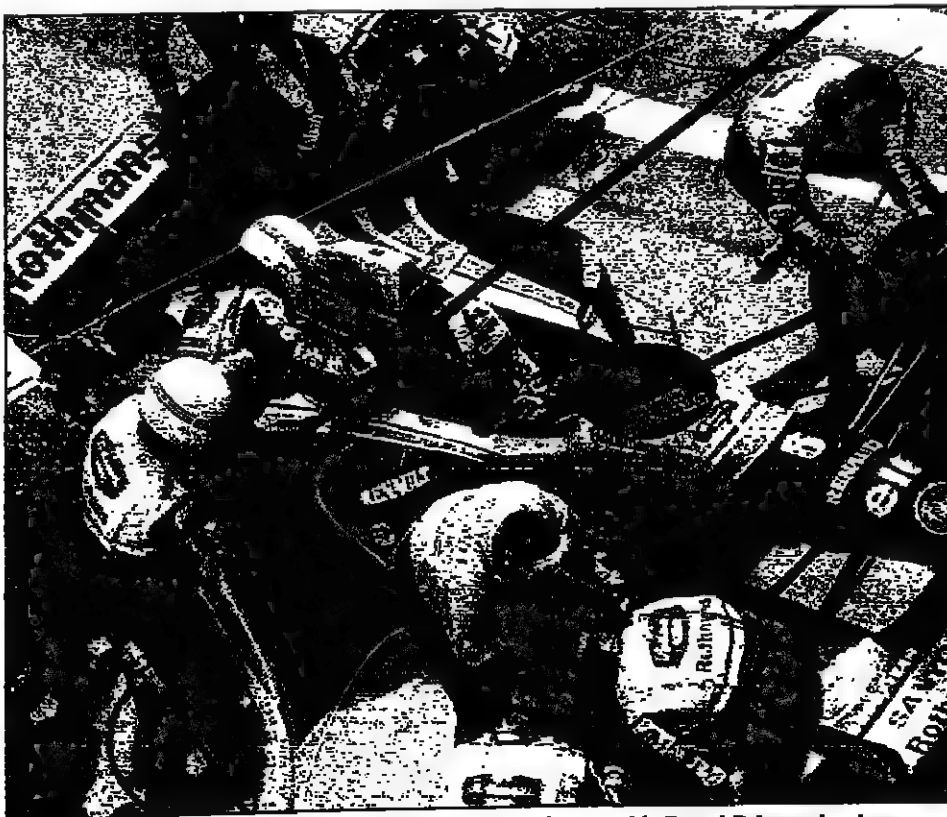
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THE WINNER of our Brazilian Grand Prix game on March 31 will win VIP hospitality for two, as guests of Jonathan Palmer, at the exciting British Grand Prix on Sunday, July 14 at Silverstone. Each place is worth £450 plus VAT.

The winner and his or her partner will meet the former F1 driver and BBC commentator in the luxurious surroundings of a new pavilion right beside Hangar Straight, the fastest part of the Silverstone circuit.

Johnny Herbert, last year's British Grand Prix winner, will also be a special guest. The Sauber-Ford driver is renowned for his sense of humour so hearing him being interviewed from a driver's perspective on the race by Jonathan Palmer should be entertaining.

Uniquely, Damon Hill's 1995 Formula 1 Williams will be present for guests to see at close quarters, complete with all the equipment to enable a pit stop to be performed. Following training from an F1 mechanic on a designated role to include use of the air-wrenches, jacks and refu-



Race against time: experience the thrill of the pit stop with Grand Prix mechanics

elling equipment, you will perform your own pit stop in teams, with prizes for the fastest.

Even before you arrive at Silverstone, your day is planned to be as pleasurable as possible with a detailed

map of side roads to guide you away from traffic jams. All day catering includes a delicious breakfast, superb four-course lunch, with free wine and traditional afternoon tea. A complimentary bar is available throughout

the day and you will be able to watch the race at the track-side or on one of our huge cinema-style screens inside the hospitality pavilion.

Besides Formula One, there is the exhilarating British Touring Cars, air displays by

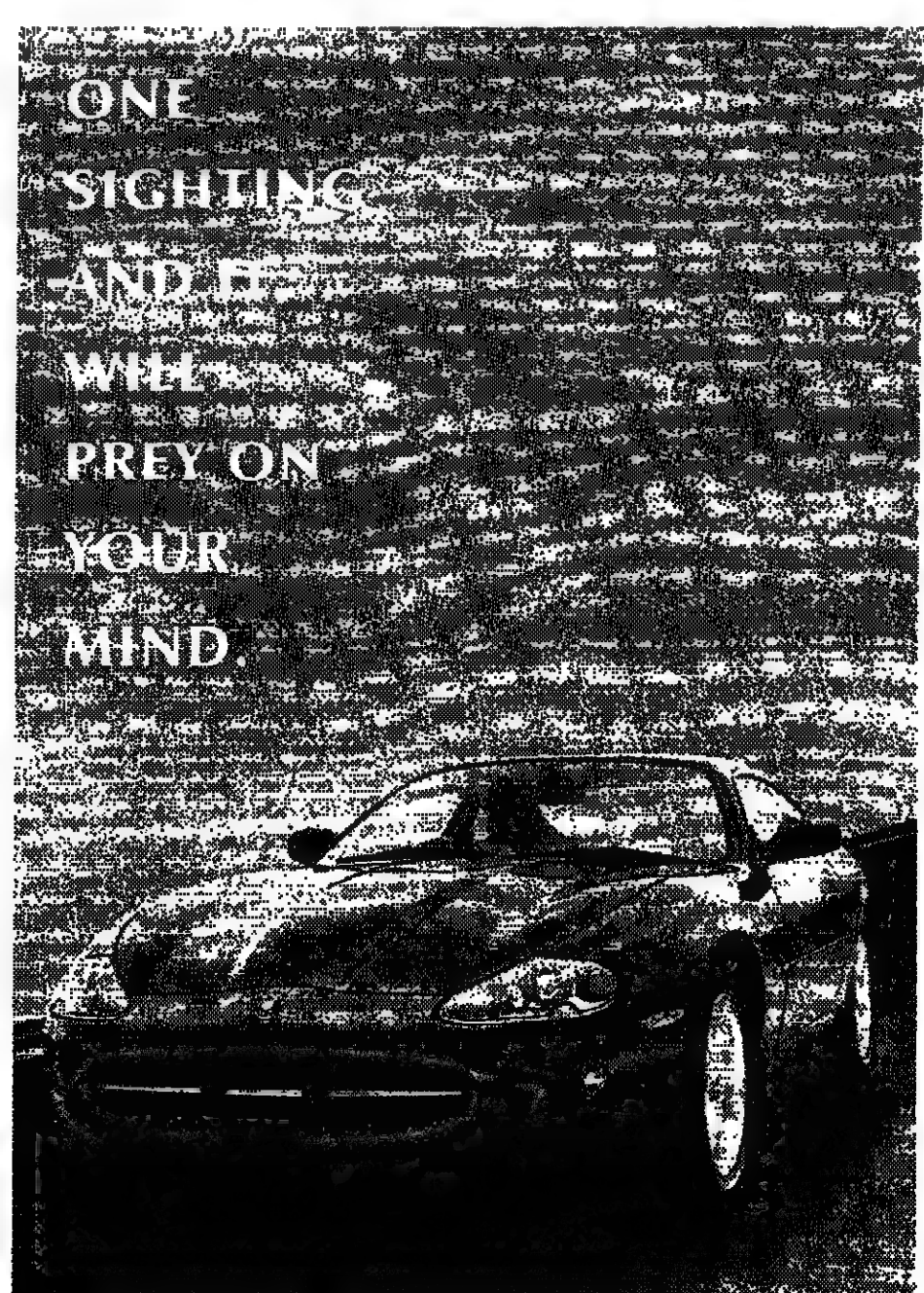
the Red Arrows and the Red Devils Parachute display. And when there is no racing there are parades of great cars and drivers.

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- Silverstone programme
- Four-course lunch and afternoon tea
- Complimentary all-day bar
- The British Grand Prix Porsche Supercup race
- Formula Renault race
- British Touring Car race

If you are not lucky enough to win our competition, you can still buy tickets for this event, by calling the telephone number below.



At the Geneva Motor Show this week, a few lucky observers caught a glimpse of the new Jaguar XK8 for the first time. The many who couldn't be there should call 0800 70 80 60. We'll send you a unique XK8 screensaver* and put you in line for further Jaguar information (as soon as more of them are spotted). *Available in PC or Apple Mac format. **JAGUAR XK8** DON'T DREAM IT. DRIVE IT. T12



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AA GRIDLOCK GUIDE

● **LONDON**
A40 Hillingdon. Waterpipe work being carried out on the Western Avenue Bridge slip roads.
A406 North Circular Road, Upper Edmonton. Major roadworks continue over the Lea Valley Viaduct.
A406 North Circular Road, Finchley. Major roadworks continue with various restrictions between the A1 and A1000 junctions.
A12 Eastern Avenue, Wansstead. Construction of the M11 link road continues, with east-bound reduced to a single lane between the Redbridge roundabout and High Street.
A243 Leatherhead Road, Chessington. Closed north-bound for major roadworks outside Chessington World of Adventures. Diversions cause delays back to junction 9 of the M25 at peak times.
A4 Great West Road, Chiswick. Between 9pm and 6am Monday-Thursday nights reduced to one lane each way for continuing repair work to the crumbling elevated section of the M4 above.

● **SOUTH-EAST**
M4 Berkshire. Major roadworks and contraflow between junctions 6 and 8/9 cause lengthy tailbacks daily.
M25 Surrey. Two sections of widening work, with lane closures and contraflows between junctions 6 and 8 and 9 and 10.
M1 Hertfordshire. Resurfacing and widening work on north-bound exit at junction 6. Slip road is sometimes closed overnight, with diversions via junction 5 and the A41.

A247 Surrey. Roadworks on the street between Clandon Station and Clandon Park. Long delays expected during peak times.
A509 Buckinghamshire. Major roadworks on the Wellingborough Road in Olney, at junction with Lavendon Road.
A264 Sussex. Delays expected through East Grinstead town centre due to several sets of roadworks on Holtye Road, Portland Land and Mole Road.
A249 Kent. Major works at the Stockbury roundabout west of Sittingbourne often cause lengthy hold-ups between the M2 and Kingsbury Bridge.

A36 Hampshire. Bridge repairs at Wellow, north-west of Southampton.
SOUTH-WEST
M4/M5 Avon. Work on second Severn crossing continues, with restrictions around the Almondsbury & Aust interchanges, and also on the M5 around junction 18.
A3030 Dorset. Down to one lane 24 hours a day through Allwinton, near Sherborne, for roadworks.

A4 Avon. Lane restrictions and temporary lights over the Newbridge Bridge, Bath, due to strengthening work on the bridge.
M5 Somerset. Bridge repairs with lane closures both ways between junctions 21 and 22.
A381 Devon. Roadworks continue in Teignmouth between Salcombe Dike and Inverleigh Drive with occasional temporary lights.
A30 Cornwall. Roadworks and contraflow near Bolventor, on Bodmin Moor.
A377 Devon. Roadworks continue around Eggesford, between Exeter and Barnstaple, with temporary traffic lights around the clock.

● **MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA**
M6 West Midlands. Major roadworks continue between junctions 5 and 6 with lane restrictions in both directions.
A6 Leicestershire. Major roadworks and contraflow at Lockington, between junction 24 of the M1 and Sawley Island.
M69 Leicestershire. Link road from the M69 to M7 north-bound closed at junction 21. A short diversion is in operation via the roundabout.
M65 Lancashire. Down to one lane in both directions between junctions 10 and 14 between 9.30am and 4pm on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.
A47 Norfolk. Two sets of major roadworks: at Terrington St John, and at Swaffham.

A11 Norfolk. Construction of Wymondham bypass continues, with lane and speed restrictions between Hethersett and Attleborough.
M6 Staffordshire. North and southbound entry sliproads on to motorway closed at junction 11 while work is carried out on the A480. Diversions are signed.
NORTH
M1 West Yorkshire. Roadworks and contraflow at end of the motorway at junction 47.
M6 Cheshire. Widening work continues between junctions 20 and 21.
M6 Greater Manchester. Roadworks and lane closures between junctions 24 and 28.
A5065 Greater Manchester. Major roadworks and lane closures on Trafford Road, near junction with Pomona Strand.
A630 South Yorkshire. Major roadworks and contraflow on the Rotherway at Canklow, between junction 33 of the M1 and Rotherham.
A167M Tyne-side. Northbound lane closures on the Newcastle central motorway near Jesmond Road interchange for bridge repairs.

● **WALES**
M4 Gwent. Widening work continues in connection with second Severn crossing between junctions 22 and 24.
A48 West Glamorgan. Construction work with lane closures on all approaches to the Wychtree roundabout at Morriston.
A483 West Glamorgan. Major roadworks and contraflow on Fabian Way, Swansea between Elbs Crescent and the Earlswood lights.
A4229 Mid Glamorgan. Roadworks and temporary traffic lights between Cornelly and Portcawl.
A547 Gwynedd. Bridge repairs with temporary traffic lights near A55 junction at Llandudno Junction.

● **SCOTLAND**
M8 Strathclyde. Westbound exit at junction 27 closed. An alternative route can be taken via junction 26 or junction 29.
A749 Strathclyde. Dalmarock Bridge, Glasgow closed south-bound for repairs.
M90 Tayside. Major roadworks at junction 10, with lane closures in both directions.

● **NORTHERN IRELAND**
County Tyrone. Roadworks on Omagh bypass at junction with Derry Road.

Vaughan Freeman hears the sorry tale of the rogue Fiat Uno and a couple's three years of frustration and danger



Vincent O'Reilly: "My wife was involved in a rush-hour collision following an engine failure, her first accident in nearly 40 years of motoring"

A goer, but only at going wrong

There was nothing Eileen O'Reilly could do when the engine died and her Fiat Uno coasted into the path of oncoming vehicles. The result was a crash which has shaken the faith of her and husband, Vincent, in the little Fiat Uno that was their pride and joy.

The couple bought the car because of Vincent's passion for the marque, kindled by his first car, the classic tiny Fiat Topolino. He bought the Uno after visiting an exhibition featuring the Fiat at a Design Centre display in London.

Now he looks back over nearly three years of frustration and cost, trying to live with a car that has given little pleasure but a lot of problems. A catalogue of parts failures, engine cut-outs, poor and rough engine running and frustrating days with the Uno in the workshop of his local garage instead of on the road. In all that time, the Uno has given only six months of trouble-free motoring, he says.

Vincent, a retired engineer, bought the Uno 1.1-litre from Marn Garage, Camberley, Surrey, for £7,900. Almost instantly, he says, the first of many niggling problems showed themselves.

"On delivery, I discovered that the radio was faulty and

the speedometer needle was vibrating at lower speeds," he says. "Also, within a few days of taking delivery, a sunroof microchip in the car's electronic ignition unit failed, the entire ignition unit replaced and a new 'Lambda' sensor, which helps to monitor engine performance, has been installed."

Early on, Eileen, came close to being involved in an accident when the engine died as she approached a roundabout, and the next day I had the same experience when the engine cut as I was overtaking a moped," says Vincent, of Finchamstead, near Wokingham, Berkshire. "It was inevitable that an accident should occur."

causing an instant and potentially lethal engine cut-out.

Over the months, important microchips in the car's electronic ignition unit failed, the entire ignition unit replaced and a new 'Lambda' sensor, which helps to monitor engine performance, has been installed.

Early on, Eileen, came close to being involved in an accident when the engine died as she approached a roundabout, and the next day I had the same experience when the engine cut as I was overtaking a moped," says Vincent, of Finchamstead, near Wokingham, Berkshire. "It was inevitable that an accident should occur."

The fault, tricky to diagnose and even harder to remedy, repeatedly left the car with reduced power, struggling along at barely 20mph and any attempt to use the throttle only resulted in the engine giving up completely. In the worst instances, the fault occurred without warning.

and sure enough it did. My wife was involved in a collision in the middle of the rush hour following an engine failure, her first accident in nearly 40 years of motoring. When I collected the car from the repair shop, the engine failed again."

Eileen was fortunately unharmed, but the accident cost the couple their £100 insurance excess and £100 no claims discount. But the final straw came a few weeks ago when the car's engine cut out as Vincent was driving along the M40.

"Fortunately, I had only just joined the motorway and was on the inside lane, or I don't know what would have happened," he says. The car was ignominiously brought home by the AA to Cleveland Cars in Ash, Aldershot, where engineers and mechanics, sadly all too familiar with the vehicle and its irritatingly unreliable innards, worked for the best part of a fortnight trying to isolate the problem.

"They have performed their exasperating tasks with a high degree of competence," he says, but adds that, while Cleveland Cars have been as diligent and courteous as he could have wished, he believes the odds are stacked against them in their battle to sort out the numerous problems that have plagued the vehicle. Even a visit by a Fiat engineer failed to keep the car running reliably long-term.

Fiat has at least reacted to the O'Reillys' plight by arranging for another engineer to examine their car and loaning

'We chose the Uno as brand loyalty to Fiat. That has been dented'

When one garage charges £18 an hour more than the one next door, it's decision time. Richard Sutton reports

Which service? The authorised version?

Two garages next door to each other and each can repair a bent BMW. The problem is that one charges £33 an hour, the other £51.60.

Having a car repaired or serviced can be a minefield of disappointments and enormous cost for thousands of motorists. The car is the biggest single annual cost they have after their homes, yet many simply give up all hope when they enter a garage — baffled by jargon, bamboozled by lack of knowledge which often costs them more.

Surely it makes sense to choose the cheaper garage of the two that sit side-by-side in Fulham: Cheyne BMW is London's biggest authorised BMW dealer and costlier than the independent garage run by Max Greene. Go to Max, or any other unauthorised dealer, and your service book will be missing the official stamps that can make the vehicle's service history look questionable, and at worst could invalidate your new car warranty.

Yet independents can be just as efficient and win huge loyalty from customers, relationships explored in a new book, *Motor Mania*, to accompany a Channel 4 series.

Harry Beggs, 86, whose father started his Cheltenham garage business in 1912, tells of a customer who has been a regular since 1930. Even David Guest, third generation proprietor of Meteor Ford in the Midlands, a company which has been a Ford main agent since the days of the Model T, says that back-street garages fulfil an important role and many have developed specialisms and are well equipped. Had the main dealer network never evolved, the small garages could never have taken advantage of its economies of scale.

So the two co-exist because

of one another, the small garage supporting the used car owner, the main dealer providing parts and technological gear in a business that has evolved into a sophisticated scientific arena.

Manufacturers argue that servicing and repairing by authorised dealers, who have invested millions of pounds in diagnostic computers, ensure work is carried out properly, while the cost of sophisticated equipment to diagnose faults is simply beyond the reach of many small independent garages. Although Max, for example, has invested in a laptop computer and software, he can't spend £90,000 needed to buy BMW's latest hardware.

He sacrifices profit by sending customers' cars next door to have problems assessed at Cheyne. "I recently had to pay

about £240 to find a small leak in a head gasket," he says. "Then I found it wasn't the head gasket — it was a clogged-up fuel injector nozzle."

These are only available now as part of the injector unit, and each costs £80.26 plus VAT from BMW. BMW apparently claims injectors should not be decoked, only replaced, but then cleaned and

decoiled using ultra-sound equipment, which costs only £20 plus VAT. Replacing the injectors on a six-cylinder BMW can be expensive. David Sheldrake, Cheyne's service manager, says clearing might only be superficial and any number of internal problems with the injector could go undetected by Max's method.

Max's approach could be a false economy, but at a saving of £361.56 (in the case of a BMW 325i) plus the difference in labour rates, plus VAT, isn't his method worth the calculated risk?

Max is not a wealthy man, he has no corporation to protect him and no besotted

Service Department front man to deal with any problem. He doesn't even have a clean, soft couch on which he can counsel a disgruntled customer. So it might be argued that, although he goes to great lengths to do things inexpensively, he does so very carefully, which is why more than half his customers have been with him for many of his 26 years in business.

"At Cheyne, it's warm, they've got carpet on the floor, a coffee machine... and I bet the mechanics even have a social life," he says. As it is, Maxwell Greene usually only goes home after his children have rung up to ask him where he is. Like so many independent garage owners, he has to be a workaholic, just to provide the service people expect.

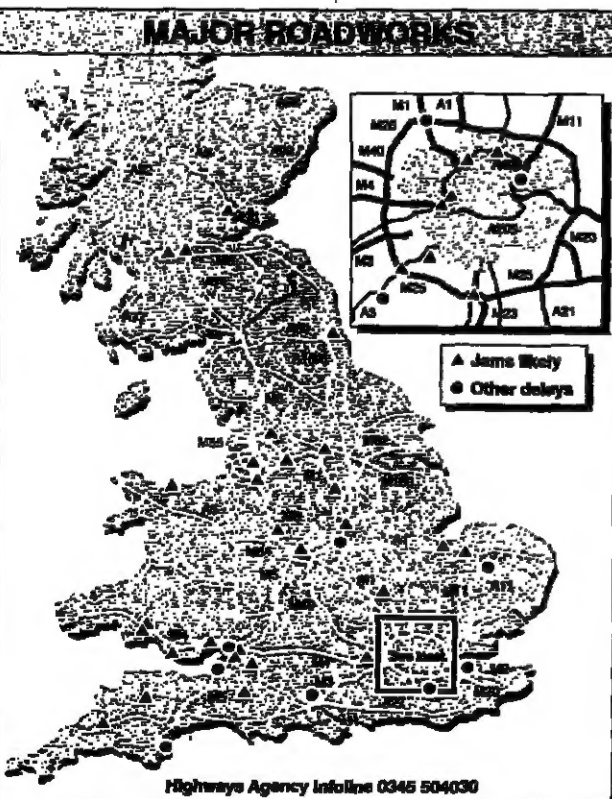
He cannot rely on BMW technician training courses, on plugged-in diagnostic equipment or corporate policy guidelines, books and rules. Instead, he uses his intelligence and intuition, fuelled by the experience he has working on all manner of cars. However, the customer, have got to trust him. And therein lies the problem, because trusting small independent garages is difficult to do, especially in the knowledge that Cheyne's has also been around for well over 20 years, and its reputation appears as white as its invoice stationery.



Max Greene: no carpets on the floor, but many of his customers have remained loyal to him for years

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- WHEN buying a used car, assess it in its own right, and if suspicious that the service history may be untrue, phone the dealer (s) detailed and ask them to check their records.
- TAKE a personal interest in how and why work is being carried out. Meet the mechanic, make him interested in you and don't be afraid to ask if parts really need to be replaced.
- NEVER tell a garage what is wrong and what needs replacing. If you do, they are perfectly within their rights to carry out your demands, even if your assessment of the faults is incorrect.
- WHEN using a non-authorised garage, insist on original equipment or genuine factory replacement parts, especially for use in engines, brakes and on bodywork, and ask to see removed parts.
- ASK authorised dealers if they have an hourly rate discount for older cars.
- AT AN independent garage, don't try to bargain over the bill. Official dealers don't, so you should not expect a small garage to carry your costs.



Motor Mania book offer

Save £2 on rrp and get free p&p

Readers of CAR 96 can obtain *Motor Mania* by Richard Sutton at a special price of £14.99 (p&p free) direct from the publishers Collins & Brown. This is a saving of £2 on the recommended retail price plus £2 on postage and packing.

To order a copy call the order hotline on 01403 710851 quoting *The Times/Motor Mania* offer ref C-01-H. The line is open from Monday-Friday and orders can be paid by credit card or cheque. Despatch is usually within two days and guaranteed within 28 days.

The next *Motor Mania* programme on Channel 4 is broadcast on Tuesday March 12 at 5pm.

ORDER HOTLINE 01403 710851

AUTOFAX by David Long and Les Evans

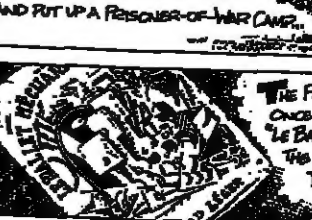
BRITAIN'S FIRST RACE SPORTS CAR, THE VALHALLA, FRANCE HENRY, TOOK ITS NAME FROM THE 17th CENTURY FRENCH NOBLEMAN...



THE LE MANS CREDIT SERVED AS AN RAF AIRFIELD IN 1939 BUT AFTER THE FALL OF FRANCE THE GERMANS CLAIMED THE SITE AND PUT UP A PRISONER-OF-WAR CAMP...

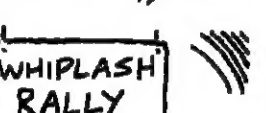
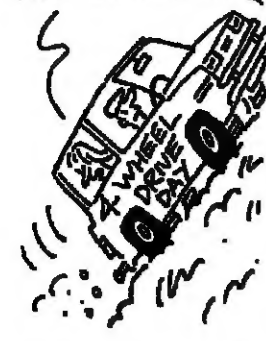


THE FRENCH PRINTER FERDINAND LEGER, ONCE MADE A RATHER SCANDALOUS CLAIM 'LE BULLET MICHOUQUIN', IN WHICH THE STATES WERE SEVERAL THOUSANT RACING HUNTERS...



L

CAR...TOONS

STOP GERALD!
WE'VE LOST
THE CARAVAN

Haldane

Cassalina Sulky? Goggomobil? David Long sees a collection of the rarest microcars

Forever owning bubbles

If you want to squeeze more than 40 cars into a single barn, you need a very big barn or some very small cars. Jean Hammond has both.

Jean and her husband, Edwin, started collecting bubble cars in the mid-1970s and 20 years on are not entirely sure quite how many they have on their Kent farm. Jean admits to "about 45, depending on how you count them. That's complete cars, but I never really know whether to include the basket cases when I get asked that one."

The names of some of them, such as Messerschmitt, Heinkel, Vespa, are immediately recognisable. Other badges, bearing the logos of AC, Allard and BMW, are equally familiar, though they are more often seen on machines at the other end of the performance scale. But most are real rarities: the Opperman Stirling, the Cassalina Sulky, the Frisky, Goggomobil, Bamby, Tourlette and Peel were built in tiny numbers and today are remembered only by the likes of the Hammonds and other members of the Register of Unusual Microcars. Some look like real cars scaled down, others make little or no attempt at conventional styling and almost glory in their toy-like bubble designs.

The collection started with a 1960c Irish-built Heinkel, which the Hammonds bought for their 6ft-tall son, Andrew, then a teenager, in an attempt to lure him away from motorbikes, while the family car was a 7.2-litre Jensen Interceptor. Andrew and his father, a trained engineer, spent 18 months restoring the Heinkel, by which time the family was hooked.

The innovative approach of the microcar designers most appeals to the engineer in



Motoring in miniature: Jean Hammond in a 1957 Heinkel, which shares the barn with Messerschmitt and other rarities

Edwin Hammond. Particularly in Germany where, from 1945, new uses had to be found for aircraft and munitions factories and designers needed to box clever to work and survive on such a small scale.

"Messerschmitt produced a car which looked like a fighter aircraft cockpit because that was what they knew best," says Jean. "And although the little Isotta looked eccentric, it was arguably the car that saved BMW."

The couple have acquired their cars from the most unlikely sources. The French Flipper was won in a raffle, one of two baby Fiats was

bought for pennies at a scout's jumble sale and a pair of sorry-looking Empolini Vanettes were donated by a pizza delivery company in London. But perhaps the saddest of all is the Kent-built Cursor which was fished out of the Medway after being dropped in by vandals.

Others, like the splendid Velorex with its imitation leather body, have at least an air of glamour. Jean's example was smuggled out of Czechoslovakia by a student escaping to the West. It has now been joined by another refugee, a toothpaste-pink Trabant from the former East Germany.

This was originally a gift to a popular teacher from his grateful pupils, each of whom autographed the bodywork as a memento for his retirement.

While nothing in the collection is exactly commonplace, the rarest exhibit is an Opperman Stirling, sole survivor of only two to be built. It's twin was shown at the 1958 London Motor Show, where it attracted considerable interest but never made it into production. Jean claims the project was killed off because the big component suppliers would not get in-

volved: "The Stirling was perceived in some quarters as a rival for the forthcoming Mini and many of the big boys were too scared to touch it in case they upset BMC."

Its eventual fate was therefore little different to that of so many of the early micros. Indeed, of an estimated 600 manufacturers, none has survived in its original form and most are all but forgotten.

Down in Kent, Jean has all the exhibits, the unflagging enthusiasm, even the building plot for her next dream: a museum dedicated to the ingenuity of the microcar. All she needs now is a sponsor.

Vaughan Freeman on a sporty Ford

Dagenham dreams up a wild cat to follow the Mustang

The Mustang of the 1960s and the Capri in the 1970s became motoring legends. Their aggressive looks might have promised more performance than they delivered, but drivers loved them and the two cars established Ford as a serious player in the four-seat sports car market.

Now Ford has unveiled the car to carry on where the Mustang and Capri left off. Designed in Britain, and based on the Dagenham-built Fiesta, the Lynx could go on sale within three years, even though Ford described it only as a concept when it was shown at this week's Geneva Motor Show.

For Ford, the Lynx is designed to make mundane motoring problems, like losing the keys, or grabbing a grubby door handle just as you are about to shake hands with the company chairman, a thing of the past. The doors ease open once the user has "swiped" the car's smart card down a special slot.

Designed by Ford's team of stylists at its Small and Medium Vehicle Centre based in Britain and Germany, chief designer Chris Clements says: "The Lynx is a modern inter-

pretation of a sports car. As the small car share of the overall car market in Europe continues to grow, an increasing number of buyers will be looking for an alternative to the conventional hot-hatch concept. We have built the Lynx to gauge the level of public interest in a compact four-seater sports car."

Despite the futuristic looks the Lynx has as much room inside for people and their shopping as the Fiesta. Ian McAllister, Ford of Britain chairman, was coy about the car's prospects of making it into production, but left little doubt that was the hope.

He said the Lynx would appeal as much to the sort of customer who would have been first to get hooked up to the Internet, as to over-55s whose children had left home and who wanted a car that was different, exciting, yet practical.

"The older generation now have the wealth to indulge those fantasies," he said. "The market is changing. People want small cars with big luxury, with refined power, and which do not give out an aggressive, brash image so much as one that is quietly assertive and confident."



The Lynx: "the modern interpretation of a sports car"

Coming soon: a game of Scrabble with Reg

Q There I was saving up for a new P-registered car in August and someone tells me that the Government is getting rid of the letter change system. Is it true?

A Yes... and no. The Department of Transport, Home Office and the motor industry have been trying to thrash out some way of getting rid of the August registration change for the sake of the industry, and it wants change sooner rather than later.

Q But why? They get loads of sales in August and everybody loves the new letter change.

A They love the sales, just not all at once. The system started to help people mark their MOT year but was moved to August to help the industry boost low summer sales.

DR DASHBOARD

But, since then, August registrations have gone ballistic, accounting now for a quarter of the annual total. That means manufacturers idle along all year and then put in a sprint for the big changeover. Dealers also have to carry masses of stock — up to 500,000 cars — for one month. Experts say the system costs the industry £1 billion.

Q So what will come in its place? Will we get those bizarre foreign-style plates with lots of letters and numbers?

A No, because the Home Office probably won't allow it. Police say witnesses remember the registration letter on a number plate if

nothing else in an accident or crime, so they want any new system to be as clear to identify as the present one. The most widely touted idea is for plates to be changed quarterly.

Q Quarterly? Why do that? We'll end up with a motor industry version of Scrabble with everybody picking up a new letter every few months.

A Maybe, but the motor industry is very enthusiastic about the idea. Executives say it would coincide with all the traditional calendar events in the sales year: January for the year start, April to coincide with spring sales campaigns, August for a summer boost and October for new model launches. Simple as A, B, C... er, only more regularly.

Q When will all this happen so I can decide which letter of the alphabet I want for my new car?

A Don't hold your breath because the talking is still going on to iron out wrinkles. There is still a chance that other systems will be chosen, perhaps adding postcode-style identifiers to a year letter code. Whatever happens, the Department of Transport won't be rushed into another system that just causes problems somewhere else in the year.

Q Does that mean I can still have my P-plate motor this August just as I planned?

A Yes, keep saving because those brand shiny new P-plates cars will all be lined up on the forecourt on August 1 as usual.

COMPANY CAR DRIVER CONTEST

● NEXT WEEK we will announce details of The Times-Leaseplan Company Car Driver of the Year competition. This is the third year of the competition, and hundreds have taken part in the detailed road and track tests that examine every facet of their skills.

But it is worth the effort, with one of the best prizes in the country on offer to the driver who makes it through a regional heat and into the final at Silverstone.

Nissan is providing its new Almera hatchback as the competition car for each heat and the final, while the road and skills

testing will be by DriveTech, one of Britain's top driver training schools, staffed by former Class One police drivers. The final will be conducted by the Silverstone Driving Centre, run by John Watson, the ex-Formula One driver and grand prix commentator on Sky Television.

So companies, hospitals, surgeries, sports centres, hotels — anywhere there are company vehicle drivers from cars to fire engines — should seek out the motorists who not only want to hone their skills but to win a top prize and the accolade of Britain's best company driver.



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